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KG 353 (4A)

The immovable features, rigid muscles and wild expression of the eyeballs, however, soon told him the melancholy truth The man was dead.
—*The Sea Lions.*

WORKS

NEW YORK:
P. F. COLLIER, PUBLISHER.
1891.

WORKS

OF

J. FENIMORE COOPER

THE SEA LIONS.

AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

THE WATER WITCH.

ILLUSTRATED WITH WOOD-ENGRAVINGS.

COMPLETE IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOLUME FOUR.

NEW YORK:
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A
KG35 (4A)

THE SEA LIONS.

PREFACE.

If anything connected with the hardness of the human heart could surprise us, it surely would be the indifference with which men live on, engrossed by their worldly objects, amid the sublime natural phenomena that so eloquently and unceasingly speak to their imaginations, affections, and judgments. So completely is the existence of the individual concentrated in self, and so regardless does he get to be of all without that contracted circle, that it does not probably happen to one man in ten that his thoughts are drawn aside from this intense study of his own immediate wants, wishes, and plans, even once in the twenty-four hours, to contemplate the majesty, mercy, truth, and justice of the Divine Being that has set him, as an atom, amid the myriads of the hosts of heaven and earth.

The physical marvels of the universe produce little more reflection than the profoundest moral truths. A million of eyes shall pass over the firmament on a cloudless night, and not a hundred minds shall be filled with a proper sense of the power of the dread Being that created all that is there—not a hundred hearts glow with the adoration that such an appeal to the senses and understanding ought naturally to produce. This indifference, in a great measure, comes of familiarity; the things that we so constantly have before us becoming as a part of the air we breathe, and as little regarded.

One of the consequences of this disposition to disregard the Almighty Hand, as it is so plainly visible in all around us, is that of substituting our own powers in its stead. In this period of the world, in enlightened countries, and in the absence of direct idoltary, few men are so hardy as to deny the existence and might of a Supreme Being; but, this fact admitted, how few really feel that profound reverence for Him that the nature of our relations justly demands! It is the want of a due sense of humility, and a sad misconception of what we are, and for what we are created, that misleads us in the due estimate of our own insignificance, as compared with the majesty of God.

Very few men attain enough of human knowledge to be fully aware how much remains to be learned, and of that which they never can hope to acquire. We hear a great deal of god-like minds, and of the far-reaching faculties we possess; and it may all be worthy of our eulogiums, until we compare ourselves in these, as in other particulars, with Him who produced them. Then, indeed, the utter insignificance of our means becomes too apparent to admit of a cavil. We know that we are born, and that we die; science has been able to grapple with all the phenomena of these two great physical facts, with the exception of the most material of all—those which should tell us what is life, and what is death. Something that we cannot comprehend lies at the root of every distinct division of natural phenomena. Thus far shalt thou go and no farther, seems to be imprinted on every great fact of creation. There is a point attained in each and all of our acquisitions, where a mystery that no human mind can scan takes the place of demonstration and conjecture. This point may lie more remote with some intellects than with others; but it exists for all, arrests the inductions of all, conceals all.

We are aware that the more learned among those who disbelieve in the divinity of Christ suppose themselves to be sustained by written authority, contending for errors of translation, mistakes and misapprehensions in the ancient texts. Nevertheless, we are inclined to think that nine-tenths of those who refuse the old and accept the new opinion, do so for a motive no better than a disinclination to believe that which they cannot comprehend. This pride of reason is one of the most insinuating of our foibles, and is to be watched as a most potent enemy.

How completely and philosophically does the venerable Christian creed embrace and modify all these workings of the heart! We say philosophically, for it were not possible for mind to give a juster analysis of the whole subject than St. Paul's most comprehensive but brief definition of Faith. It is this Faith which forms the mighty feature of the church on earth. It equalizes capacities, conditions, means, and ends, holding out the same encouragement and hope to the least, as to the most gifted of the race; counting gifts in their ordinary and more secular points of view.

It is when health, or the usual means of success abandon us, that we are made to feel how totally we are insufficient for the achievement of even our own purposes, much less to qualify us to reason on the deep mysteries that conceal the beginning and the end. It has often been said that the most successful leaders of their fellowmen have had the clearest views of their own insufficiency to attain their own objects. If Napoleon ever said, as has been attributed to him, "*Je propose et je dispose,*" it must have been in one of those fleeting moments in which success blinded him to the fact of his own insufficiency. No man had a deeper reliance on fortune, cast the result of great events on the decrees of fate, or more anxiously watched the rising and setting of what he called his "star." This was a faith that could lead to no good; but it clearly denoted how far the boldest designs, the most ample means, and the most vaulting ambition, fall short of giving that sublime consciousness of power and its fruits that distinguish the reign of Omnipotence.

In this book the design has been to portray man on a novel field of action, and to exhibit his dependence on the hand that does not suffer a sparrow to fall unheeded. The recent attempts of science, which employed the seamen of the four greatest maritime states of Christendom, made discoveries that have rendered the polar circles much more familiar to this age than to any that has preceded it, so far as existing records show. We say "existing records;" for there is much reason for believing that the ancients had a knowledge of our hemisphere, though less for supposing that they ever braved the dangers of the high latitudes. Many are, just at this moment, much disposed to believe that "Ophir" was on this continent; though for a reason no better than the circumstance of the recent discoveries of much gold. Such savans should remember that "peacocks" came from ancient Ophir. If this be in truth that land, the adventurers of Israel caused it to be denuded of that bird of beautiful plumage.

Such names as those of Parry, Sabine, Ross, Franklin, Wilkes, Hudson, Ringgold, etc., etc., with those of divers gallant Frenchmen and Russians, command our most profound respect; for no battles or victories can redound more to the credit of seamen than the dangers they all encountered, and the conquests they have all achieved. One of those named, a resolute and experienced seaman, it is thought must, at this moment, be locked in the frosts of the Arctic circle, after having passed half a life in the endeavor to push his discoveries into those remote and frozen regions. He bears the name of the most distinguished of the philosophers of this country; and nature has stamped on his features—by one of those secret laws which just as much baffle our means of comprehension, as the greatest of all our mysteries, the incarnation of the Son of God—a resemblance that, of itself, would go to show that they are of the same race. Anyone who has ever seen this imprisoned navigator, and who is familiar with the

countenances of the men of the same name who are to be found in numbers amongst ourselves, must be struck with a likeness that lies as much beyond the grasp of that reason of which we are so proud, as the sublimest facts taught by induction, science, or revelation. Parties are, at this moment, out in search of him and his followers; and it is to be hoped that the Providence which has so singularly attempered the different circles and zones of our globe, placing this under a burning sun, and that beneath enduring frosts, will have included in its divine forethought a sufficient care for these bold wanderers to restore them, unharmed, to their friends and country. In a contrary event, their names must be transmitted to posterity as the victims to a laudable desire to enlarge the circle of human knowledge, and with it, we trust, to increase the glory due to God.

CHAPTER I.

——"When that's gone,
He shall drink naught but brine."
—TEMPEST.

WHILE there is less of that high polish in America that is obtained by long intercourse with the great world than is to be found in nearly every European country, there is much less positive rusticity also. There, the extremes of society are widely separated, repelling rather than attracting each other; while among ourselves, the tendency is to gravitate toward a common center. Thus it is, that all things in America become subject to a mean law that is productive of a mediocrity which is probably much above the average of that of most nations; possibly of all, England excepted; but which is only a mediocrity after all. In this way, excellence in nothing is justly appreciated, nor is it often recognized; and the suffrages of the nation are pretty uniformly bestowed on qualities of a secondary class. Numbers have sway, and it is as impossible to resist them in deciding on merit as it is to deny their power in the ballot-boxes; time alone, with its great curative influence, supplying the remedy that is to restore the public mind to a healthful state, and give equally to the pretender and to him who is worthy of renown his proper place in the pages of history.

The activity of American life, the rapidity and cheapness of intercourse, and the migratory habits both have induced, leave little of rusticity and local character in any particular sections of the country. Distinctions, that an acute observer may detect, do certainly exist between the Eastern and the Western man, between the Northerner and the Southerner, the Yankee and Middle States' man; the Bostonian, Manhattanese, and Philadelphian; the Tuckahoe and the Cracker; the Buckeye or Wolverine, and the Jersey Blue. Nevertheless, the world cannot probably produce another instance of a people who are derived from so many different races, and who occupy so large an extent of country, who are so homogeneous in appearance, characters, and opinions. There is no question that the institutions have had a material influence in producing this uniformity, while they have unquestionably lowered the standard to which opinion is submitted, by referring the decisions to the many, instead of making the appeal to the few, as is elsewhere done. Still, the direction is onward, and though it may take time to carve on the social column of America that graceful and ornamental capital which it forms the just boast of Europe to possess, when the task shall be achieved, the work will stand on a base so broad as to secure its upright attitude for ages.

Notwithstanding the general character of identity and homogeneity that so strongly marks the picture of American society, exceptions are to be met with, in particular districts, that are not only distinct and incontrovertible, but which are so peculiar as to be worthy of more than a passing remark in our delineations of national customs. Our present purpose leads us into one of these secluded districts, and it may be well to commence the narrative of certain deeply interesting incidents that it is our intention to attempt to portray, by first referring to the

place and people where and from whom the principal actors in our legend had their origin.

Every one at all familar with the map of America knows the position and general form of the two islands that shelter the well-known harbor of the great emporium of the commerce of the country. These islands obtained their names from the Dutch, who called them Nassau and Staten; but the English, with little respect for the ancient house whence the first of these appellations is derived, and consulting only the homely taste which leads them to a practical rather than to a poetical nomenclature in all things, have since virtually dropped the name of Nassau, altogether substituting that of Long Island in its stead.

Long Island, or the island of Nassau, extends from the mouth of the Hudson to the eastern line of Connecticut; forming a sort of sea-wall to protect the whole coast of the latter little territory against the waves of the broad Atlantic. Three of the oldest New York counties, as their names would imply, Kings, Queens, and Suffolk, are on this island. Kings was originally peopled by the Dutch, and still possesses as many names derived from Holland as from England, if its towns, which are of recent origin, be taken from the account. Queens is more of a mixture, having been early invaded and occupied by adventurers from the other side of the Sound; but Suffolk, which contains nearly, if not quite, two-thirds of the surface of the whole island, is and ever has been in possession of a people derived originally from the Puritans of New England. Of these three counties, Kings is much the smallest, though, next to New York itself, the most populous county in the State; a circumstance that is owing to the fact that two suburban offsets of the great emporium, Brooklyn and Williamsburg, happen to stand within its limits, on the waters of what is improperly called the East River; an arm of the sea that has obtained this appellation in contradistinction to the Hudson, which, as all Manhattanese well know, is as often called the North River as by its proper name. In consequence of these two towns, or suburbs of New York, one of which contains nearly a hundred thousand souls, while the other must be drawing on toward twenty thousand, Kings County has lost all it ever had of peculiar or local character. The same is true of Queens, though in a diminished degree; but Suffolk remains Suffolk still, and it is with Suffolk alone that our present legend requires us to deal. Of Suffolk, then, we propose to say a few words by way of preparatory explanation.

Although it has actually more sea-coast than all the rest of New York united, Suffolk has but one seaport that is ever mentioned beyond the limits of the county itself. Nor is this port one of general commerce, its shipping being principally employed in the hardy and manly occupation of whaling. As a whaling town, Sag Harbor is the third or fourth port in the country, and maintains something like that rank in importance. A whaling haven is nothing without a whaling community. Without the last it is almost hopeless to look for success. New York can, and has often fitted whalers for sea, having sought officers in the regular whaling ports; but it has been seldom that the enterprises have been rewarded with such returns as to induce a second voyage by the same parties.

It is as indispensable that a whaler should possess a certain *esprit de corps*, as that a regiment, or a ship of war, should be animated by its proper spirit. In the whaling communities, this spirit exists to an extent and in a degree that is wonderful, when one remembers the great expansion of this particular branch of trade within the last five-and-twenty years. It may be a little lessened of late, but at the time of which we are writing, or about the year 1820, there was scarcely an individual who followed this particular calling out of the port of Sag Harbor, whose general standing on board ship was not as well known to all the women and girls of the place as it was to his shipmates. Success in taking the whale was a thing that made itself felt in every fiber of the prosperity of the town; and it was

just as natural that the single-minded population of that part of Suffolk should regard the bold and skillful harpooner or lancer with favor, as it is for the belle at a watering-place to bestow her smiles on one of the young heroes of Contreras or Cherubusco. His peculiar merit, whether with the oar, lance or harpoon, is bruited about, as well as the number of whales he may have succeeded in "making fast to," or those which he caused to "spout blood." It is true that the great extension of the trade within the last twenty years, by drawing so many from a distance into its pursuits, has in a degree lessened this local interest and local knowledge of character; but at the time of which we are about to write both were at their height, and Nantucket itself had not more of this "intelligence office" propensity, or more of the true whaling *esprit de corps*, than were to be found in the district of country that surrounded Sag Harbor.

Lond Island forks at its eastern end, and may be said to have two extremities. One of these, which is much the shortest of the two legs thus formed, goes by the name of Oyster Pond Point; while the other, that stretches much farther in the direction of Block Island, is the well-known cape called Montauk. Within the fork lies Shelter Island, so named from the snug berth it occupies. Between Shelter Island and the longest or southern prong of the fork are the waters which compose the haven of Sag Harbor—an estuary of some extent; while a narrow but deep arm of the sea separates this island from the northern prong, that terminates at Oyster Pond.

The name of Oyster Pond Point was formerly applied to a long, low, fertile, and pleasant reach of land that extended several miles from the point itself, westward, toward the spot where the two prongs of the fork united. It was not easy, during the first quarter of the present century, to find a more secluded spot on the whole island than Oyster Pond. Recent enterprises have since converted it into the terminus of a railroad; and Green Port, once called Sterling, is a name well known to travelers between New York and Boston; but in the earlier part of the present century it seemed just as likely that the *Santa Casa* of Loretta should take a new flight and descend on the point, as that the improvement that has actually been made should in truth occur at that out-of-the-way place. It required, indeed, the keen eye of a railroad projector to bring this spot in connection with anything; nor could it be done without having recourse to the water by which it is almost surrounded. Using the last, it is true, means have been found to place it in a line between two of the great marts of the country, and thus to put an end to all its seclusion, its simplicity, its peculiarities, and we had almost said, its happiness.

It is to us ever a painful sight to see the rustic virtues rudely thrown aside by the intrusion of what are termed improvements. A railroad is certainly a capital invention for the traveler, but it may be questioned if it is of any other benefit than that of pecuniary convenience to the places through which it passes. How many delightful hamlets, pleasant villages, and even tranquil country towns, are losing their primitive characters for simplicity and contentment by the passage of these fiery trains, that drag after them a sort of bastard elegance, a pretension that is destructive of peace of mind, and an uneasy desire in all who dwell by the wayside to pry into the mysteries of the whole length and breadth of the region it traverses!

We are writing of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and nineteen. In that day Oyster Pond was, in one of the best acceptations of the word, a rural district. It is true that its inhabitants were accustomed to the water, and to the sight of vessels, from the two-decker to the little shabby-looking craft that brought ashes from town to meliorate the sandy lands of Suffolk. Only five years before an English squadron had lain in Gardiner's Bay, here pronounced "Gar'-ners," watching the Race, or eastern outlet of the Sound, with a view to cut off the trade and annoy their enemy. That game is up forever. No hostile squadron, En-

glish, French, Dutch, or all united, will ever again blockade an American port for any serious length of time — the young Hercules passing too rapidly from the gristle into the bone any longer to suffer antics of this nature to be played in front of his cradle. But such was not his condition in the war of 1812, and the good people of Oyster Pond had become familiar with the checkered sides of two-deck ships, and the venerable and beautiful ensign of Old England, as it floated above them.

Nor was it only by these distant views, and by means of hostilities, that the good folk of Oyster Pond were acquainted with vessels. New York is necessary to all on the coast, both as a market and as a place to procure supplies; and every creek, or inlet, or basin, of any sort, within a hundred leagues of it, is sure to possess one or more craft that ply between the favorite haven and the particular spot in question. Thus was it with Oyster Pond. There is scarce a better harbor on the whole American coast than that which the narrow arm of the sea that divides the point from Shelter Island presents; and even in the simple times of which we are writing Sterling had its two or three coasters, such as they were. But the true maritime character of Oyster Pond, as well as that of all Suffolk, was derived from the whalers, and its proper nucleus was across the estuary, at Sag Harbor. Thither the youths of the whole region resorted for employment, and to advance their fortunes, and generally with such success as is apt to attend enterprise, industry, and daring, when exercised with energy in a pursuit of moderate gains. None became rich in the strict signification of the term, though a few got to be in reasonably affluent circumstances; many were placed altogether at their ease, and more were made humbly comfortable. A farm in America is well enough for the foundation of family support, but it rarely suffices for all the growing wants of these days of indulgence, and of a desire to enjoy so much of that which was formerly left to the undisputed possession of the unquestionably rich. A farm, with a few hundreds *per annum* derived from other sources, makes a good base of comfort; and if the hundreds are converted into thousands, your farmer or agriculturist becomes a man not only at his ease, but a proprietor of some importance. The farms on Oyster Pond were neither very extensive, nor had they owners of large incomes to support them; on the contrary, most of them were made to support their owners; a thing that is possible, even in America, with industry, frugality, and judgment. In order, however, that the names of places we may have occasion to use shall be understood, it may be well to be a little more particular in our preliminary explanation.

The reader knows that we are now writing of Suffolk County, Long Island, New York. He also knows that our opening scene is to be on the shorter, or most northern, of the two prongs of that fork which divides the eastern end of this island, giving it what are properly two capes. The smallest territorial division that is known to the laws of New York, in rural districts, is the "township," as it is called. These townships are usually larger than the English parish, corresponding more properly with the French canton. They vary, however, greatly in size, some containing as much as a hundred square miles, which is the largest size, while others do not contain more than a tenth of that surface.

The township in which the northern prong, or point of Long Island, lies, is named Southold, and includes not only all of the long, low, narrow land that then went by the common names of Oyster Pond, Sterling, etc., but several islands also which stretch off in the Sound, as well as a broad piece of territory near Riverhead. Oyster Pond, which is the portion of the township that lies on the "point," is, or *was*—for we write of a remote period in the galloping history of the State—only a part of Southold, and probably was not then a name known in the laws at all.

We have a wish, also, that this name should be pronounced properly. It is not called Oyster *Pond*, as the uninitiated

would be very apt to get it, but *Oyster* Pûnd, the last word having a sound similar to that of the cockney's "pound" in his "two poûnd two." This discrepancy between the spelling and the pronunciation of proper names is agreeable to us, for it shows that a people are not put in leading-strings by pedagogues, and that they make use of their own in their own way. We remember how great was our satisfaction once, on entering Holmes' Hole, a well-known bay in this very vicinity, in our youth, to hear a boatman call the port "Hum'ses Hull." It is getting to be so rare to meet with an American, below the higher classes, who will consent to cast this species of veil before his school-day acquisitions, that we acknowledge it gives us pleasure to hear such good, homely, old-fashioned English as "Gar'ner's Island," "Hum'ses Hull," and "*Oyster* Pûnd."

This plainness of speech was not the only proof of the simplicity of former days that was to be found in Suffolk, in the first quarter of the century. The eastern end of Long Island lies so much out of the track of the rest of the world, that even the new railroad cannot make much impression on its inhabitants, who get their pigs and poultry, butter and eggs, a little earlier to market than in the days of the stage-wagons, it is true, but they fortunately, as yet, bring little back except it be the dross that sets everything in motion, whether it be by rail, or through the sands, in the former toilsome mode.

The season, at the precise moment when we desire to take the reader with us to Oyster Pond, was in the delightful month of September, when the earlier promises of the year are fast maturing into performance. Although Suffolk, as a whole, can scarcely be deemed a productive county, being generally of a thin, light soil, and still covered with a growth of small wood, it possesses, nevertheless, spots of exceeding fertility. A considerable portion of the northern prong of the fork has this latter character, and Oyster Pond is a sort of a garden compared with much of the sterility that prevails around it. Plain but respectable dwellings, with numerous out-buildings, orchards, and fruit-trees, fences carefully preserved, a painstaking tillage, good roads, and here and there a "meeting-house," gave the fork an air of rural and moral beauty that, aided by the water by which it was so nearly surrounded, contributed greatly to relieve the monotony of so dead a level. There were heights in view, on Shelter Island, and bluffs toward Riverhead, which, if they would not attract much attention in Switzerland, were by no means overlooked in Suffolk. In a word, both the season and the place were charming, though most of the flowers had already faded; and the apple, and the pear, and the peach, were taking the places of the inviting cherry. Fruit abounded, notwithstanding the close vicinity of the district to salt water, the airs from the sea being broken, or somewhat tempered, by the land that lay to the southward.

We have spoken of the coasters that ply between the emporium and all the creeks and bays of the Sound, as well as of the numberless rivers that find an outlet for their waters between Sandy Hook and Rockaway. Wharves were constructed, at favorable points, *inside* the prong, and occasionally a sloop was seen at them loading its truck, or discharging its ashes or street manure; the latter being a very common return cargo for a Long Island coaster. At one wharf, however, now lay a vessel of a different mold, and one which, though of no great size, was manifestly intended to go *outside*. This was a schooner that had been recently launched, and which had advanced no farther in its first equipment than to get in its two principal spars, the rigging of which hung suspended over the mast-heads, in readiness to be "set up" for the first time. The day being Sunday, work was suspended, and this so much the more, because the owner of the vessel was a certain Deacon Pratt, who dwelt in a house within half a mile of the wharf, and who was also the proprietor of three several parcels of land in that neighborhood, each of which had its own buildings and conveniences, and was properly enough dignified with the name of a

farm. To be sure, neither of these farms was very large, their acres united amounting to but little more than two hundred; but, owing to their condition, the native richness of the soil, and the mode of turning them to account, they had made Deacon Pratt a warm man for Suffolk.

There are two great species of deacons; for we suppose they must all be referred to the same *genera*. One species belong to the priesthood, and become priests and bishops; passing away, as priests and bishops are apt to do, with more or less of the savor of godliness. The other species are purely laymen, and are *sui generis*. They are, *ex-officio*, the most pious men in a neighborhood, as they sometimes are, as it would seem to us, *ex-officio*, also the most grasping and mercenary. As we are not in the secrets of the sects to which these lay deacons belong, we shall not presume to pronounce whether the individual is elevated to the deaconate because he is prosperous, in a worldly sense, or whether the prosperity is a consequence of the deaconate; but, that the two usually go together is quite certain; which being the cause, and which the effect, we leave to wiser heads to determine.

Deacon Pratt was no exception to the rule. A tighter-fisted sinner did not exist in the county than this pious soul, who certainly not only wore, but wore out the "form of godliness," while he was devoted, heart and hand, to the daily increase of worldly gear. No one spoke disparagingly of the deacon, notwithstanding. So completely had he got to be interwoven with the church—"meeting," we ought to say—in that vicinity, that speaking disparagingly of him would have appeared like assailing Christianity. It is true, that many an unfortunate fellow-citizen in Suffolk had been made to feel how close was the gripe of his hand, when he found himself in its grasp; but there is a way of practicing the most ruthless extortion, that serves not only to deceive the world, but which would really seem to mislead the extortioner himself. Phrases take the place of deeds, sentiments those of facts, and grimaces those of benevolent looks, so ingeniously and so impudently that the wronged often fancy that they are the victims of a severe dispensation of Providence, when the truth would have shown that they were simply robbed.

We do not mean, however, that Deacon Pratt was a robber. He was merely a hard man in the management of his affairs, never cheating, in a direct sense, but seldom conceding a cent to generous impulses, or to the duties of kind. He was a widower, and childless, circumstances that rendered his love of gain still less pardonable; for many a man who is indifferent to money on his own account, will toil and save to lay up hoards for those whe are to come after him. The deacon had only a niece to inherit his effects, unless he might choose to step beyond that degree of consanguinity, and bestow a portion of his means on cousins. The church—or, to be more literal, the "meeting"—had an eye to his resources, however; and it was whispered it had actually succeeded, by means known to itself, in squeezing out of his tight grasp no less a sum than one hundred dollars, as a donation to a certain theological college. It was conjectured by some persons that this was only the beginning of a religious liberality, and that the excellent and godly-minded deacon would bestow most of his property in a similar way, when the moment should come that it could be no longer of any use to himself. This opinion was much in favor with divers devout females of the deacon's congregation, who had daughters of their own, and who seldom failed to conclude their observations on this interesting subject with some such remark as, "Well, in *that* case, and it seems to me that everything points that way, Mary Pratt will get no more than any other poor man's daughter."

Little did Mary, the only child of Israel Pratt, an elder brother of the deacon, think of all this. She had been left an orphan in her tenth year, both parents dying within a few months of each other, and had lived beneath her uncle's roof for nearly ten more years, until use, and natural affection, and the customs of the

country, had made her feel absolutely at home there. A less interested, or less selfish being than Mary Pratt, never existed. In this respect she was the very antipodes of her uncle, who often stealthily rebuked her for her charities and acts of neighborly kindness, which he was wont to term waste. But Mary kept the even tenor of her way, seemingly not hearing such remarks, and doing her duty quietly, and in all humility.

Suffolk was settled originally by emigrants from England, and the character of its people is to this hour of modified New England habits and notions. Now one of the marked peculiarities of Connecticut is an indisposition to part with anything without a *quid pro quo*. Those little services, offerings and conveniences that are elsewhere parted with without a thought of remuneration, go regularly upon the day-book, and often reappear on a "settlement," years after they have been forgotten by those who received the favors. Even the man who keeps a carriage will let it out for hire; and the manner in which money is accepted, and even asked for by persons in easy circumstances, and for things that would be gratuitous in the Middle States, often causes disappointment, and sometimes disgust. In this particular Scottish and Swiss thrift, both notorious, and the latter particularly so, are nearly equaled by New England thrift; more especially in the close estimate of the value of services rendered. So marked, indeed, is this practice of looking for requitals, that even the language is infected with it. Thus, should a person pass a few months by invitation with a friend, his visit is termed "boarding;" it being regarded as a matter of course that he pays his way. It would scarcely be safe, indeed, without the precaution of "passing receipts" on quitting, for one to stay any time in a New England dwelling, unless prepared to pay for his board. The free and frank habits that prevail among relatives and friends elsewhere, are nearly unknown there, every service having its price. These customs are exceedingly repugnant to all who have been educated in different notions; yet they are not without their redeeming qualities, that might be pointed out to advantage, though our limits will not permit us, at this moment, so to do.

Little did Mary Pratt suspect the truth; but habit, or covetousness, or some vague expectation that the girl might yet contract a marriage that would enable him to claim all his advances, had induced the deacon never to bestow a cent on her education, or dress, or pleasures of any sort, that the money was not regularly charged against her in that nefarious work he called his "day-book." As for the self-respect, and the feelings of caste, which prevent a gentleman from practicing any of these tradesmen's tricks, the deacon knew nothing of them. He would have set the man down as a fool who deferred to any notions so unprofitable. With him not only every *man*, but every *thing*, "had its price," and usually it was a good price, too. At the very moment when our tale opens, there stood charged in his book, against his unsuspecting and affectionate niece, items in the way of schooling, dress, board, and pocket money, that amounted to the considerable sum of one thousand dollars, money fairly expended. The deacon was only intensely mean and avaricious, while he was as honest as the day. Not a cent was overcharged; and, to own the truth, Mary was so great a favorite with him that most of his charges against *her* were rather of a reasonable rate than otherwise.

CHAPTER II.

"Marry, I saw your niece do more favors
To the count's serving-man, than ever she bestowed
Upon me; I saw it i' the orchard!"
—TWELFTH NIGHT.

ON the Sunday in question, Deacon Pratt went to meeting as usual, the building in which divine service was held that day, standing less than two miles from his residence; but, instead of remaining for the afternoon's preaching, as was his wont, he got into his one-horse chaise, the vehicle then in universal use among the middle classes, though now so

seldom seen, and skirred away homeward as fast as an active, well-fed, and powerful switch-tailed mare could draw him; the animal being accompanied in her rapid progress by a colt of some three months' existence. The residence of the deacon was unusually inviting for a man of his narrow habits. It stood on the edge of a fine apple-orchard, having a door-yard of nearly two acres in its front. This door-yard, which had been twice mown that summer, was prettily embellished with flowers, and was shaded by four rows of noble cherry trees. The house itself was of wood, as is almost uniformly the case in Suffolk, where little stone is to be found, and where brick constructions are apt to be thought damp; but it was a respectable edifice, with five windows in front, and of two stories. The siding was of unpainted cedar-shingles; and, although the house had been erected long previously to the Revolution, the siding had been renewed but once, about ten years before the opening of our tale, and the whole building was in a perfect state of repair.

The thrift of the deacon rendered him careful, and he was thoroughly convinced of the truth of the familiar adage which tells us that "a stitch in time saves nine." All around the house and farm was in perfect order, proving the application of the saying. As for the view, it was sufficiently pleasant, the house having its front toward the east, while its end windows looked, the one set in the direction of the Sound, and the other in that of the arm of the sea, which belongs properly to Peconic Bay, we believe. All this water, some of which was visible over points and among islands, together with a smiling and fertile, though narrow stretch of foreground, could not fail of making an agreeable landscape.

It was little, however, that Deacon Pratt thought of views, or beauty of any sort, as the mare reached the open gate of his own abode. Mary was standing in the stoop, or porch of the house, and appeared to be anxiously awaiting her uncle's return. The latter gave the reins to a black, one who was no longer a slave, but who was a descendant of some of the ancient slaves of the Pratts, and in that character consented still to dawdle about the place, working for half price. On alighting, the uncle approached the niece with somewhat of interest in his manner.

"Well, Mary," said the former, "how does he get on now?"

"Oh! my dear sir, he cannot possibly live, I think, and I do most earnestly entreat that you will let me send across to the harbor for Dr. Sage."

By the harbor was meant Sag's, and the physician named was one of merited celebrity in old Suffolk. So healthy was the country in general, and so simple were the habits of the people, that neither lawyer nor physician was to be found in every hamlet, as is the case to-day. Both were to be had at Riverhead, as well as at Sag Harbor; but, if a man called out "Squire," or "Doctor," in the highways of Suffolk, sixteen men did not turn round to reply, as is said to be the case in other regions; one half answering to the one appellation, and the second half to the other. The deacon had two objections to yielding to his niece's earnest request; the expense being one, though it was not in this instance the greatest; there was another reason that he kept to himself, but which will appear as our narrative proceeds.

A few weeks previously to the Sunday in question, a sea-going vessel, inward bound, had brought up in Gardiner's Bay, which is a usual anchorage for all sorts of craft. A worn-out and battered seaman had been put ashore on Oyster Pond, by a boat from this vessel, which sailed to the westward soon after, proceeding most probably to New York. The stranger was not only well advanced in life, but he was obviously wasting away with disease.

The account given of himself by this seaman was sufficiently explicit. He was born on Martha's Vineyard, but, as is customary with the boys of that island, he had left home in his twelfth year, and had now been absent from the place of his birth a little more than half a century. Conscious of the decay which beset him,

and fully convinced that his days were few and numbered, the seaman, who called himself Tom Daggett, had felt a desire to close his eyes in the place where they had first been opened to the light of day. He had persuaded the commander of the craft mentioned to bring him from the West Indies, and to put him ashore as related, the Vineyard being only a hundred miles or so to the eastward of Oyster Pond Point. He trusted to luck to give him the necessary opportunity of overcoming these last hundred miles.

Daggett was poor, as he admitted, as well as friendless and unknown. He had with him, nevertheless, a substantial sea-chest, one of those that the sailors of that day uniformly used in merchant-vessels, a man-of-war compelling them to carry their cloths in bags, for the convenience of compact stowage. The chest of Daggett, however, was a regular inmate of the forecastle, and, from its appearance, had made almost as many voyages as its owner. The last, indeed, was heard to say that he had succeeded in saving it from no less than three shipwrecks. It was a reasonably heavy chest, though its contents, when opened, did not seem to be of any very great value.

A few hours after landing this man had made a bargain with a middle-aged widow, in very humble circumstances, and who dwelt quite near to the residence of Deacon Pratt, to receive him as a temporary inmate; or, until he could get a "chance across to the Vineyard." At first Daggett kept about, and was much in the open air. While able to walk he met the deacon, and singular—nay, unaccountable as it seemed to the niece—the uncle soon contracted a species of friendship for, not to say intimacy with, this stranger. In the first place, the deacon was a little particular in not having intimates among the necessitous, and the Widow White soon let it be known that her guest had not even a "red cent." He had chattels, however, that were of some estimation among seamen; and Roswell Gardiner, or "Gar'ner," as he was called, the young seaman *par excellence* of the Point, one who had been not only a-whaling, but who had also been a-sealing, and who at that moment was on board the deacon's schooner, in the capacity of master, had been applied to for advice and assistance. By the agency of Mr. Gar'ner, as the young mate was then termed, sundry palms, sets of sail-needles, a fid or two, and various other similar articles, that obviously could no longer be of any use to Daggett, were sent across to the "Harbor," and disposed of there, to advantage, among the many seamen of the port. By these means the stranger was, for a few weeks, enabled to pay his way, the board he got being both poor and cheap.

A much better result attended this intercourse with Gardiner than that of raising the wornout seaman's immediate ways and means. Between Mary Pratt and Roswell Gardiner there existed an intimacy of long standing for their years, as well as of some peculiar features, to which there will be occasion to advert hereafter. Mary was the very soul of charity in all its significations, and this Gardiner knew. When, therefore, Daggett became really necessitous, in the way of comforts that even money could not command beneath the roof of the Widow White, the young man let the fact be known to the deacon's niece, who immediately provided sundry delicacies that were acceptable to the palate of even disease. As for her uncle, nothing was at first said to him on the subject. Although his intimacy with Daggett went on increasing, and they were daily more and more together in long and secret conference, not a suggestion was ever made by the deacon in the way of contributing to his new friend's comforts. To own the truth, to give was the last idea that ever occurred to this man's thoughts.

Mary Pratt was observant, and of a mind so constituted that its observations usually led her to safe and accurate deductions. Great was the surprise of all on the Point when it became known that Deacon Pratt had purchased and put into the water the new sea-going craft that was building on speculation at Southold. Not only had he done this, but he had ac-

tually bought some half-worn copper, and had it placed on the schooner's bottom, as high as the bends, ere he had her launched. While the whole neighborhood was "exercised" with conjectures on the motive which could induce the deacon to become a ship-owner in his age, Mary did not fail to impute it to some secret but powerful influence that the sick stranger had obtained over him. He now spent nearly half his time in private communications with Daggett; and, on more than one occasion, when the niece had taken some light article of food over for the use of the last, she found him and her uncle examining one or two dirty and well-worn charts of the ocean. As she entered, the conversation invariably was changed; nor was Mrs. White ever permitted to be present at one of these secret conferences.

Not only was the schooner purchased, and coppered, and launched, and preparations made to fit her for sea, but "young Gar'ner" was appointed to command her! As respects Roswell Gardiner, or "Gar'ner," as it would be almost thought a breach of decorum, in Suffolk, not to call him, there was no mystery. Six-and-twenty years before the opening of our legend, he had been born on Oyster Pond itself, and of one of its best families. Indeed, he was known to be a descendant of Lyon Gardiner, that engineer who had been sent to the settlement of the lords Saye, and Seal, and Brook, since called Sayebrook, near two centuries before, to lay out a town and a fort. This Lyon Gardiner had purchased of the Indians the island in that neighborhood which still bears his name. This establishment on the island was made in 1639; and now, at an interval of two hundred and nine years, it is in possession of its ninth owner, all having been of the name and blood of its original patentee. This is great antiquity for America, which, while it has produced many families of greater wealth and renown, and importance, than that of the Gardiners, has seldom produced any of more permanent local respectability. This is a feature in society that we so much love to see, and which is so much endangered by the uncertain and migratory habits of the people, that we pause a moment to record this instance of stability, so pleasing and so commendable, in an age and country of changes.

The descendants of any family of two centuries' standing will, as a matter of course, be numerous. There are exceptions, certainly; but it is the rule. Thus is it with Lyon Gardiner and his progeny, who are now to be numbered in scores, including persons in all classes of life, though it carries with it a stamp of caste to be known in Suffolk as having come direct from the loins of old Lyon Gardiner. Roswell, of that name, if not of that ilk, the island then being the sole property of David Johnson Gardiner, the predecessor and brother of its present proprietor, was allowed to have this claim, though it would exceed our genealogical knowledge to point out the precise line by which this descent was claimed. Young Roswell was of respectable blood on both sides, without being very brilliantly connected or rich. On the contrary early left an orphan, fatherless and motherless, as was the case with Mary Pratt, he had been taken from a country academy when only fifteen, and sent to sea, that he might make his own way in the world. Hitherto his success had not been of a very flattering character. He had risen, notwithstanding, to be the chief mate of a whaler, and bore an excellent reputation among the people of Suffolk. Had it only been a year or two later, when speculation took hold of the whaling business in a large way, he would not have had the least difficulty in obtaining a ship. As it was, however, great was his delight when Deacon Pratt engaged him as master of the new schooner, which had been already named the *Sea Lion*, or *Sea Lyon*, as Roswell sometimes affected to spell the word, in honor of his old progenitor, the engineer.

Mary Pratt had noted all these proceedings, partly with pain, partly with pleasure, but always with great interest. It pained her to find her uncle, in the decline of life, engaging in a business about which he knew nothing. It pained her still more to see one whom she loved from habit, if

not from moral sympathies, wasting the few hours that remained for preparing for the last great change in attempts to increase possessions that were already much more than sufficient for his wants. This consideration, in particular, deeply grieved Mary Pratt; for she was profoundly pious, with a conscience that was so sensitive as materially to interfere with her happiness, as will presently be shown, while her uncle was merely a deacon. It is one thing to be a deacon, and another to be devoted to the love of God, and to that love of our species which we are told is the consequence of a love of the Deity. The two are not incompatible; neither are they identical. This Mary had been made to see, in spite of all her wishes to be blind as respects the particular subject from whom she had learned the unpleasant lesson. The pleasure felt by our heroine, for such we now announce Mary Pratt to be, was derived from the preferment bestowed on Roswell Gardiner. She had many a palpitation of the heart when she heard of his good conduct as a seaman, as she always did whenever she heard his professional career alluded to at all.

On this point Roswell was without spot, as all Suffolk knew and confessed. On Oyster Pond he was regarded as a species of sea lion himself, so numerous and so exciting were the incidents that were related of his prowess among the whales. But there was a dark cloud before all these glories in the eyes of Mary Pratt, which for two years had disinclined her to listen to the young man's tale of love, which had induced her to decline accepting a hand that had now been offered to her, with a seaman's ardor, a seaman's frankness, and a seaman's sincerity, some twenty times at least, and which had induced her to struggle severely with her own heart, which she had long found to be a powerful ally of her suitor. That cloud came from a species of infidelity that is getting to be so widely spread in America as no longer to work in secret, but which lifts its head boldly among us, claiming openly to belong to one of the numerous sects of the land. Mary had reason to think that Roswell Gardiner denied the divinity of Christ, while he professed to honor and defer to him as a man far elevated above all other men, and as one whose blood had purchased the redemption of his race!

We will take this occasion to say that our legend is not polemical in any sense, and that we have no intention to enter into discussions or arguments connected with this subject, beyond those which we may conceive to be necessary to illustrate the picture which it is our real aim to draw —that of a confiding, affectionate, nay, devoted woman's heart, in conflict with a deep sense of religious duty.

Still, Mary rejoiced that Roswell Gardiner was to command the *Sea Lion*. Whither this little vessel, a schooner of about one hundred and forty tons measurement, was to sail, she had not the slightest notion; but, go where it might, her thoughts and prayers were certain to accompany it. These are woman's means of exerting influence, and who shall presume to say that they are without results, and useless? On the contrary, we believe them to be most efficacious; and thrice happy is the man who, as he treads the mazes and wiles of the world, goes accompanied by the petitions of such gentle and pure-minded beings at home as seldom think of approaching the throne of grace without also thinking of him and of his necessities. The Romanists say, and rightly too, could one only believe in their efficacy, that the prayers they offer up in behalf of departed friends are of the most endearing nature; but it would be difficult to prove that petitions for the souls of the dead can demonstrate greater interest, or bind the parties more closely together in the unity of love, than those that are constantly offered up in behalf of the living.

The interest that Mary Pratt felt in Roswell's success needs little explanation. In all things he was most agreeable to her, but in the one just mentioned. Their ages, their social positions, their habits, their orphan condition, even their prejudices—and who that dwells aside from the world is without them, when most of those who encounter its collisions still

cherish them so strongly?—all united to render them of interest to each other. Nor was Deacon Pratt at all opposed to the connection; on the contrary, he appeared rather to favor it.

The objections came solely from Mary, whose heart was nearly ready to break each time that she was required to urge them. As for the uncle, it is not easy to say what could induce him to acquiesce in, to favor indeed, the addresses to his niece and nearest relative, of one who was not known to possess five hundred dollars in the world. As his opinions on this subject were well known to all on Oyster Pond, they had excited a good deal of speculation; "exercising" the whole neighborhood, as was very apt to be the case whenever anything occurred in the least out of the ordinary track. The several modes of reasoning were something like this:

Some were of opinion that the deacon foresaw a successful career to, and eventful prosperity in the habits and enterprise of the young mate, and that he was willing to commit to his keeping, not only his niece, but the three farms, his "money at use," and certain shares he was known to own in a whaler, and no less than three coasters, as well as an interest in a store at Southold; that is to say, to commit them all to the keeping of "young Gar'ner," when he was himself dead; for no one believed he would part with more than Mary, in his own lifetime.

Others fancied he was desirous of getting the orphan off his hands, in the easiest possible way, that he might make a bequest of his whole estate to the theological institution that had been coquetting with him now, for several years, through its recognized agents, and to which he had already made the liberal donation of one hundred dollars. It was well ascertained that the agents of that institution openly talked of getting Deacon Pratt to sit for his portrait, in order that it might be suspended among those of others of its benefactors.

A third set reasoned differently from both the foregoing. The "Gar'ners" were a better family than the Pratts, and the deacon being so "well to do," it was believed by these persons that he was disposed to unite money with name, and thus give to his family consideration from a source that was somewhat novel in its history. This class of reasoners was quite small, however, and mainly consisted of those who had rarely been off of Oyster Pond, and who passed their days with "Gar'ner's Island" directly before their eyes. A few of the gossips of this class pretended to say that their own young sailor stood next in succession after the immediate family actually in possession should run out, of which there was then some prospect; and that the deacon, sly fellow, knew all about it! For this surmise, to prevent useless expectations in the reader, it may be well to say at once, there was no foundation whatever, Roswell's connection with the owner of the island being much too remote to give him any chance of succeeding to that estate, or to anything else that belonged to him.

There was a fourth and last set among those who speculated on the deacon's favor toward "young Gar'ner," and these were they who fancied that the old man had opened his heart toward the young couple, and was disposed to render a deserving youth and a beloved niece happy. This was the smallest class of all; and, what is a little remarkable, it contained only the most reckless and least virtuous of all those who dwelt on Oyster Pond. The parson of the parish, or the Pastor as he was usually termed, belonged to the second category, that good man being firmly impressed that most, if not all, of Deacon Pratt's worldly effects would eventually go to help propagate the gospel.

Such was the state of things when the deacon returned from meeting, as related in the opening chapter. At his niece's suggestion of sending to the Harbor for Dr. Sage, he had demurred, not only on account of the expense, but for a still more cogent reason. To tell the truth, he was exceedingly distrustful of any one's being admitted to a communication with Daggett, who had revealed to him matters that he deemed to be of great importance, but

who still retained the key to his most material mystery. Nevertheless, decency, to say nothing of the influence of what folks "would say," the Archimedean lever of all society of puritanical origin, exhorted him to consent to his niece's proposal.

"It is such a roundabout road to get to the Harbor, Mary," the uncle slowly objected after a pause.

"Boats often go there, and return in a few hours."

"Yes, yes—*boats;* but I'm not certain it is lawful to work boats of a Sabbath, child."

"I believe, sir, it was deemed lawful to do good on the Lord's day."

"Yes, if a body was certain it *would* do any good. To be sure, Sage is a capital doctor—as good as any going in these parts—but, half the time, money paid for doctor's stuff is thrown away."

"Still, I think it our duty to try to serve a fellow-creature that is in distress; and Daggett, I fear, will not go through the week, if indeed he go through the night."

"I should be sorry to have him die!" exclaimed the deacon, looking really distressed at this intelligence. "Right sorry should I be to have him die—just yet."

The last two words were uttered unconsciously, and in a way to cause the niece to regret that they had been uttered at all. But they had come, notwithstanding, and the deacon saw that he had been too frank. The fault could not now be remedied, and he was fain to allow his words to produce their own effect.

"Die he will, I fear, uncle," returned Mary, after a short pause; "and sorry should I be to have it so without our feeling the consolation of knowing we had done all in our power to save him, or to serve him."

"It is so far to the Harbor, that no good might come of a messenger; and the money paid *him* would be thrown away, too."

"I dare say Roswell Gar'ner would be glad to help a fellow-creature who is suffering. *He* would not think of demanding any pay."

"Yes, that is true. I will say this for Gar'ner, that he is as reasonable a young man, when he does an odd job, as any one I know. I like to employ him."

Mary understood this very well. It amounted to neither more nor less than the deacon's perfect consciousness that the youth had, again and again, given him his time and his services gratuitously; and that, too, more than once, under circumstances when it would have been quite proper that he should look for a remuneration. A slight color stole over the face of the niece as memory recalled to her mind these different occasions. Was that sensitive blush owing to her perceiving the besetting weakness of one who stood in the light of a parent to her, and toward whom she endeavored to feel the affection of a child? We shall not gainsay this, so far as a portion of the feeling which produced that blush was concerned; but, certain it is, that the thought that Roswell had exerted himself to oblige *her* uncle, obtruded itself somewhat vividly among her other recollections.

"Well, sir," the niece resumed, after another brief pause, "we can send for Roswell, if you think it best, and ask him to do the poor man this act of kindness."

"Your messengers after doctors are always in such a hurry! I dare say Gar'ner would think it necessary to hire a horse to cross Shelter Island, and then perhaps a boat to get across to the Harbor. If no boat was to be found, it might be another horse to gallop away round the head of the Bay. Why, five dollars would scarce meet the cost of such a race!"

"If five dollars were needed, Roswell would pay them out of his own pocket, rather than ask another to assist him in doing an act of charity. But, no horse will be necessary; the whale-boat is at the wharf, and is ready for use at any moment."

"True, I had forgotten the whale-boat. If that is home the doctor might be brought across at a reasonable rate; especially if Gar'ner will volunteer. I dare say Daggett's effects will pay the bill for attendance, since they have answered, as yet, to meet the Widow White's charges.

As I live, here comes Gar'ner at this moment, and just as we want him."

"I knew of no other to ask to cross the bays, sir, and sent for Roswell before you returned. Had you not got back as you did, I should have taken on myself the duty of sending for the doctor."

"In which case, girl, you would have made yourself liable. I have too many demands on my means to be scattering dollars broadcast. But, here is Gar'ner, and I dare say all will be made right."

Gardiner now joined the uncle and niece, who had held this conversation in the porch, having hastened up from the schooner the instant he received Mary's summons. He was rewarded by a kind look and a friendly shake of the hand, each of which was slightly more cordial than those that prudent and thoughtful young woman was accustomed to bestow on him. He saw that Mary was a little earnest in her manner, and looked curious, as well as interested, to learn why he had been summoned at all. Sunday was kept so rigidly at the deacon's that the young man did not dare visit the house until after the sun had set; the New England practice of commencing the Sabbath of a Saturday evening, and bringing it to a close at the succeeding sunset, prevailing among most of the people of Suffolk, the Episcopalians forming nearly all the exceptions to the usage. Sunday evening, consequently, was in great request for visits, it being the favorite time for the young people to meet, as they were not only certain to be unemployed, but to be in their best. Roswell Gardiner was in the practice of visiting Mary Pratt on Sunday evenings; but he would almost as soon think of desecrating a church, as think of entering the deacon's abode, on the Sabbath, until after sunset or "sun*down*," to use the familiar Americanism that is commonly applied to this hour of the day. Here he was now, however, wondering, and anxious to learn why he had been sent for.

"Roswell," said Mary earnestly, slightly coloring again as she spoke, "we have a great favor to ask. You know the poor old sailor who has been staying at the Widow White's this month or more—he is now very low; so low, we think he ought to have better advice than can be found on Oyster Pond, and we wish to get Dr. Sage over from the Harbor. How to do it has been the question, when I thought of you. If you could take the whale-boat and go across, the poor man might have the benefit of the doctor's advice in the course of a few hours."

"Yes," put in the uncle, "and I shall charge nothing for the use of the boat; so that, if *you* volunteer, Gar'ner, it will leave so much toward settling up the man's accounts, when settling-day comes."

Roswell Gardiner understood both uncle and niece perfectly. The intense selfishness of the first was no more, a secret to him than was the entire disinterestedness of the last. He gazed a moment, in fervent admiration, at Mary; then he turned to the deacon, and professed his readiness to "volunteer." Knowing the man so well, he took care distinctly to express the word, so as to put the mind of this votary of Mammon at ease.

"Gar'ner will *volunteer*, then," rejoined the uncle, "and I shall charge nothing for the use of the boat. This is 'doing as we would be done by,' and is all right, considering that Daggett is sick and among strangers. The wind is fair, or nearly fair, to go and to come back, and you'll make a short trip of it. Yes, it will cost nothing, and may do the poor man good."

"Now go at once, Roswell," said Mary, in an entreating manner; "and show the same skill in managing the boat that you did the day you won the race against the Harbor oarsmen."

"I will do all that a man can, to oblige you, Mary, as well as to serve the sick. If Dr. Sage should not be at home, am I to look for another physician, Mr. Pratt?"

"Sage *must* be at home—we can employ no other. Your old long-established physicians understand how to consider practice, and don't make mistakes—by the way, Gar'ner, you needn't mention *my* name in the business at all. Just say

that a sick man, at the Widow White's, needs his services, and that you had *volunteered* to take him across. *That* will bring him—I know the man."

Again Gardiner understood what the deacon meant. He was just as desirous of not paying the physician as of not paying the messenger. Mary understood him, too, and, with a face more sad than anxiety had previously made it, she walked into the house, leaving her uncle and lover in the porch. After a few more injunctions from the former, in the way of prudent precaution, the latter departed, hurrying down to the waterside in order to take the boat.

CHAPTER III.

"All that glisters is not gold,
Often have you heard that told;
Many a man his life hath sold,
But my outside to behold."
—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

No sooner was Deacon Pratt left alone, than he hastened to the humble dwelling of the Widow White. The disease of Daggett was a general decay, that was not attended with much suffering. He was now seated in a homely armchair, and was able to converse. He was not aware, indeed, of the real danger of his case, and still had hopes of surviving many years. The deacon came in at the door, just as the widow had passed through it, on her way to visit another crone, who lived hard by, and with whom she was in the constant habit of consulting. She had seen the deacon in the distance, and took that occasion to run across the road, having a sort of instinctive notion that her presence was not required when the two men conferred together. What was the subject of their frequent private communications, the Widow White did not exactly know; but what she imagined, will in part appear in her discourse with her neighbor, the Widow Stone.

"Here's the deacon, ag'in!" cried the Widow White, as she bolted hurriedly into her friend's presence. "This makes the third time he has been at *my* house since yesterday morning. Whan *can* he mean?"

"Oh! I dare say, Betsy, he means no more than to visit the sick, as he pretends is the reason of his many visits."

"You forget it is Sabba' day!" added the Widow White, with emphasis.

"The better day, the better deed, Betsy."

"I know that; but it's dreadful often for a *man* to visit the sick—three times in twenty-four hours!"

"Yes; 'twould have been more nat'ral for a woman, a body must own," returned the Widow Stone, a little dryly. "Had the deacon been a woman, I dare say, Betsy, you would not have thought so much of his visits."

"I should think nothing of them at all," rejoined the sister widow, innocently enough. "But it is dreadful odd in a *man* to be visiting about among the sick so much—and he a deacon of the meeting!"

"Yes, it is not as common as it might be, particularly among deacons. But, come in, Betsy, and I will show you the text from which the minister preached this morning. It's well worth attending to, for it touches on our forlorn state." Hereupon, the two relicts entered an inner room, where we shall leave them to discuss the merits of the sermon, interrupted by many protestations on the part of the Widow White, concerning the "dreadful" character of Deacon Pratt's many visits to *her* cottage, "Sabba' days" as well as week days.

In the meanwhile, the interview between the deacon himself, and the sick mariner, had its course. After the first salutations, and the usual inquiries, the visitor, with some parade of manner, alluded to the fact that he had sent for a physician for the other's benefit.

"I did it of my own head," added the deacon; "or, I might better say, of my own heart. It was unpleasant to me to witness your sufferings, without doing something to alleviate them. To alleviate sorrow, and pain, and the throes of conscience, is one of the most pleasant of all the Christian offices. Yes, I have sent young Gar'ner across the bays, to the

Harbor; and three or four hours hence we may look for him back, with Dr. Sage in his boat."

"I only hope I shall have the means to pay for all this expense and trouble, deacon," returned Daggett, in a sort of doubting way, that, for a moment, rendered his friend exceedingly uncomfortable. "Go, I know I must, sooner or later; but could I only live to get to the Vineyard, it would be found that my share of the old homestead would make up for all my wants. I *may* live to see the end of the other business."

Among the other tales of Daggett, was one which said that he had never yet received his share of his father's property; an account that was true enough, though the truth might have shown that the old man had left nothing worth dividing. He had been a common mariner, like the son, and had left behind him a common mariner's estate. The deacon mused a moment, and then he took an occasion to advert to the subject that had now been uppermost in his thoughts ever since he had been in the habit of holding secret conferences with the sick man. What that subject was, will appear in the course of the conversation that ensued.

"Have you thought of the chart, Daggett?" asked the deacon, "and given an eye to that journal?"

"Both, sir. Your kindness to me has been so great, that I am not a man apt to forget it."

"I wish you would show me, yourself, the precise place on the chart where them islands are to be found. There is nothing like seeing a thing with one's own eyes."

"You forget my oath, Deacon Pratt. Every man on us took his Bible oath not to point out the position of the islands, until a'ter the year 1820. Then, each and all on us is at liberty to do as he pleases. But, the chart is in my chest, and not only the islands, but the key, is so plainly laid down that any mariner could find 'em. With that chest, however, I cannot part, so long as I live. Get me well, and I will sail in the *Sea Lion*, and tell your Captain Gar'ner all he will have occasion to know. The man's fortune will be made who first gets to either of them places."

"Yes, I can imagine that easy enough, from your accounts, Daggett—but, how am I to be certain that some other vessel will not get the start of me?"

"Because the secret is now my own. There was but seven on us, in that brig, all told. Of them seven, four died at the islands of the fever, homeward bound; and of the other three, the captain was drowned in the squall I told you of, when he was washed overboard. That left only Jack Thompson and me; and Jack, I think, must be the very man whose death I see'd six months since, as being killed by a whale on the False Banks."

"Jack Thompson is so common a name, a body never knows. Besides, if he was killed by that whale, he may have told the secret to a dozen before the accident."

"There's his oath ag'in it. Jack was sworn, as well as all on us, and he was a man likely to stand by what he swore to. This was none of your custom-house oaths, of which a chap might take a dozen of a morning, and all should be false; but it was an oath that put a seaman on his honor, since it was a good-fellowship affair, all round."

Deacon Pratt did not *tell* Daggett that Thompson might have as good reasons for disregarding the oath as he had himself; but he *thought* it. These are things that no wise man utters on such occasions; and this opinion touching the equality of the obligation of that oath was one of them.

"There is another hold upon Jack," continued Daggett, after reflecting a moment. "He never could make any fist of latitude and longitude at all, and he kept no journal. Now, should he get it wrong, he and his friends might hunt a year without finding either of the places."

"You think there was no mistake in the pirate's account of that key, and of the buried treasure?" asked the deacon, anxiously.

"I would swear to the truth of what *he* said, as freely as if I had seen the box myself. They was necessitated, as you may suppose, or they never would have left so

much gold, in sich an uninhabited place; but leave it they did, on the word of a dying man."

"Dying?—You mean the pirate, I suppose?"

"To be sure I do. We was shut up in the same prison, and we talked the matter over at least twenty times, before he was swung off. When they were satisfied I had nothing to do with the pirates, I was cleared; and I was on my way to the Vineyard, to get some craft or other, to go a'ter these two treasures (for one is just as much a treasure as t'other) when I was put ashore here. It's much the same to me, whether the craft sails from Oyster Pond or from the Vineyard."

"Of course. Well, as much to oblige you, and to put your mind at rest, as anything else, I've bought this *Sea Lion*, and engaged young Roswell Gar'ner to go out in her, as her master. She'll be ready to sail in a fortnight, and, if things turn out as you say, a good voyage will she make. All interested in her will have reason to rejoice. I see but one thing needful just now, and that is, that you should give me the chart at once, in order that I may study it well, before the schooner sails."

"Do you mean to make the v'y'ge yourself, deacon?" asked Daggett, in some surprise.

"Not in person, certainly," was the answer. "I'm getting somewhat too old to leave home for so long a time; and, though born and brought up in sight of salt-water, I've never tried it beyond a trip to York, or one to Boston. Still, I shall have my property in the adventure, and it's nat'ral to keep an eye on *that*. Now, the chart well studied beforehand would be much more useful, it seems to me, than it can possibly be if taken up at a late hour."

"There will be time enough for Captain Gar'ner to overhaul his chart well, afore he reaches either of his ports," returned the mariner, evasively. "If I sail with him, as I suppose I *must*, nothing will be easier than for me to give all the courses and distances."

This reply produced a long and brooding silence. By this time the reader will have got a clew to the nature of the secret that was discussed so much and so often between these two men. Daggett, finding himself sick, poor, and friendless, among strangers, had early cast about him for the means of obtaining an interest with those who might serve him. He had soon got an insight into the character of Deacon Pratt, from the passing remarks of the Widow White, who was induced to allude to the uncle in consequence of the charitable visits of the niece. One day, when matters appeared to be at a very low ebb with him, and shortly after he had been put ashore, the sick mariner requested an interview with the deacon himself. The request had been reluctantly granted; but, during the visit, Daggett had managed so well to whet his visitor's appetite for gain, that henceforth there was no trouble in procuring the deacon's company. Little by little had Daggett let out his facts, always keeping enough in reserve to render himself necessary, until he had got his new acquaintance in the highest state of feverish excitement. The schooner was purchased, and all the arrangements necessary to her outfit were pressed forward as fast as prudence would at all allow. The chart, and the latitude and longitude, were the circumstances over which Daggett retained the control. These he kept to himself, though he averred that he had laid down on the charts that were in his chest the two important points which had been the subjects of his communications.

Although this man had been wily in making his revelations, and had chosen his confidant with caution and sagacity, most of that which he related was true. He had belonged to a sealer that had been in a very high southern latitude, where it had made some very important discoveries touching the animals that formed the objects of its search. It was possible to fill a vessel in those islands in a few weeks; and the master of the sealer, Daggett having been his mate, had made all his people swear on their "Bible oaths" not to reveal the facts, except under prescribed circumstances. His own vessel was full

when he made the discoveries, but misfortune befell her on her homeward-bound passage, until she was herself totally lost in the West Indies, and that in a part of the ocean where he had no business to be.

In consequence of these several calamities, Daggett and one more man were the sole living depositories of the important information. These men separated, and, as stated, Daggett had reason to think that his former shipmate had been recently killed by a whale. The life and movements of a sailor are usually as eccentric as the career of a comet. After the loss of the sealing vessel, Daggett remained in the West Indies and on the Spanish Main for some time, until, falling into evil company, he was imprisoned on a charge of piracy, in company with one who better deserved the imputation. While in the same cell the pirate had made a relation of all the incidents of a very eventful life.

Among other things revealed was the fact that, on a certain occasion, he and two others had deposited a very considerable amount of treasure on a key that he described very minutely, and which he now bestowed on Daggett as some compensation for his present unmerited sufferings, his companions having both been drowned by the upsetting of their boat on the return from the key in question. Subsequently, this pirate had been executed, and Daggett liberated. He was not able to get to the key without making friends and confidants on whom he could rely, and he was actually making the best of his way to Martha's Vineyard with that intent, when put ashore on Oyster Pond. In most of that which this man had related to the deacon, therefore, he had told the truth, though it was the truth embellished, as is so apt to be the case with men of vulgar minds. He might have been misled by the narrative of the pirate, but it was his own opinion that he had not been. The man was a Scot, prudent, wary, and sagacious; and in the revelations he made he appeared to be governed by a conviction that his own course was run, and that it was best that his secret should not die with him. Daggett had rendered him certain services, too, and gratitude might have had some influence.

"My mind has been much exercised with this matter of the hidden gold," resumed the deacon, after the long pause already mentioned. "You will remember that there may be lawful owners of that money, should Gar'ner even succeed in finding it."

"'Twould be hard for 'em to prove their claims, sir, if what McGosh told me was true. Accordin' to his account, the gold came from all sides—starboard and larboard, as a body might say—and it was jumbled together, and so mixed, that a young girl could not pick out her lover's keepsake from among the other pieces. 'Twas the 'arnin's of three years' cruisin', as I understood him to say; and much of the stuff had been exchanged in port, especially to get the custom-house officers and king's officers out of its wake. There's king's officers among them bloody Spaniards, Deacon Pratt, all the same as among the English."

"Be temperate in your language, friend; a rough speech is unseemly, particularly on the Lord's day."

Daggett rolled the tobacco over his tongue, and his eyes twinkled with a sort of leer, which indicated that the fellow was not without some humor. He submitted patiently to the rebuke, however, making no remonstrance against its reception.

"No, no," he added presently, "a starn chase, they say, is a long chase; and the owners of them doubloons, if owners they can now be called, must be out of sight long before this. Accordin' to McGosh, some of the gold raally captured had passed back through the hands of them that sent it to sea, and they did not know their own children!"

"It is certainly hard to identify coin, and it would be a bold man who should stand up in open court, and make oath to its being the same he had once held. I have heard of the same gold's having answered the purposes of twenty banks, one piece being so like another."

"Ay, ay, sir, gold is gold; and any of it is good enough for me, though doub-

loons is my favor*ites*. When a fellow has got half-a-dozen doubloons alongside of his ribs he can look the landlord full in the eye; and no one thinks of saying to sich as he, 'It's time to think of shipping ag'in.'"

From the nature of this discourse, it will not be easy for the reader to imagine the real condition of Daggett. At the very moment he was thus conversing of money, and incidentally manifesting his expectations of accompanying Roswell Gardiner in the expedition that was about to sail, the man had not actually four-and-twenty hours of life in him. Mary Pratt had foreseen his true state, accustomed as she was to administer to the wants of the dying: but no one else appeared to be aware of it, not even the deacon. It was true that the fellow spoke, as it might be, from his throat only, and that his voice was hollow, and sometimes reduced to a whisper; but he ascribed this, himself, to the circumstance that he had taken a cold. Whether the deacon believed this account or not, it might be difficult to say; but he appeared to give it full credit. Perhaps his mind was so much occupied with the subject of his discussion with Daggett that it did not sufficiently advert to the real condition of the man.

Twice that afternoon did Deacon Pratt go between the cottage of the Widow White and his own dwelling. As often did the relict fly across the way to express her wonder to the Widow Stone at the frequency of the rich man's visits. The second time that he came was when he saw the whale-boat rounding the end of Shelter Island, and he perceived, by means of his glass, that Dr. Sage was in it. At this sight the deacon hurried off to the cottage again, having something to say to Daggett that could no longer be delayed.

"The whale-boat will soon be in," he observed, as soon as he had taken his seat, "and we shall shortly have the doctor here. That young Gar'ner does what he has to do, always, with a jerk! There was no such haste, but he seems to be ever in a hurry!"

"Do what is to be done at once, and then lie by, is the sailor's rule, deacon," rejoined the mariner. "Squalls, and gusts, and reefin', and brailin' up, and haulin' down, won't wait for the seaman's leisure. *His* work must be done at once, or it will not be done at all. I'm not afeard of the doctor; so let him come as soon as he pleases. Medicine can't hurt a body, if he don't take it."

"There's one thing I wish to say to you, Daggett, before Dr. Sage comes in. Talking too much may excite you, especially talking of matters that are of interest; and you may give him a false impression of your state should you get the pulse up and the cheek flushed by overtalking."

"I understand you, deacon. My secret is my secret, and no doctor shall get it out of me as long as I know what I say. I'm not so friendly with them as to seek counsel among doctors."

"Then it's the Lord's day," added the Pharisee, "and it is not seemly to dwell too much on worldly interests on the Sabbath."

A novice might have been surprised, after what had passed, at the exceeding coolness with which the deacon uttered this sentiment. Daggett was not so in the least, however; for he had taken the measure of his new confidant's conscience, and had lived long enough to know how marked was the difference between professions and practice. Nothing, indeed, is more common than to meet with those who denounce that in others which is of constant occurrence with themselves; and who rail at vices that are so interwoven with their own moral being as to compose integral portions of their existence. As for the deacon, he really thought it would be unseemly, and of evil example, for Daggett to converse with Dr. Sage touching these doubloons on the Lord's day; while he had felt no scruples himself, a short hour before, to make them the theme of a long and interesting discussion in his own person. It might not repay us for the trouble to look for the salve that the worthy man applied to his own conscience by way of reconciling the apparent contradiction; though it probably was connected with some fancied and especial duty on his part of taking care of the sick man's se-

crets. Sickness, it is well known, forms the apology for many an error, both of omission and commission.

Dr. Sage now arrived; a shrewd, observant, intelligent man, who had formerly represented the district in which he lived in Congress. He was skillful in his profession, and soon made up his mind concerning the state of his patient. As the deacon never left him for a moment, to him he first communicated his opinion, after the visit, as the two walked back toward the well-known dwelling of the Pratts.

"This poor man is in the last stages of a decline," said the physician coolly, "and medicine can do him no good. He *may* live a month; though it would not surprise me to hear of his death in an hour."

"Do you think his time so short!" exclaimed the deacon; "I was in hopes he might last until the *Sea Lion* goes out, and that a voyage might help to set him up."

"Nothing will ever set him up again, deacon, you may depend on that. No sea-voyage will do him any good; and it is better that he should remain on shore, on account of the greater comforts he will get. Does he belong on Oyster Pond?"

"He comes from somewhere east," answered the deacon, careful not to let the doctor know the place whence the stranger had come, though to little purpose, as will presently be seen. "He has neither friend nor acquaintance here; though I should think his effects sufficient to meet all charges."

"Should they not be, he is welcome to my visit," answered the doctor, promptly; for he well understood the deacon's motive in making the remark. "I have enjoyed a pleasant sail across the bays with young Gar'ner, who has promised to take me back again. I like boating, and am always better for one of these sailing excursions. Could I carry my patients along, half of them would be benefited by the pure air and the exercise."

"It's a grateful thing to meet with one of your temperament, doctor; but Daggett——"

"Is this man named Daggett?" interrupted the physician.

"I *believe* that is what he calls himself, though a body never is certain of what such people say."

"That's true, deacon; your rambling, houseless sailor is commonly a great liar—at least, so have I always found him. Most of their log-books will not do to read; or, for that matter, to be written out, in full. But if this man's name is really Daggett, he must come from the Vineyard. There are Daggetts there in scores; yes, he must be a Vineyard man."

"There are Daggetts in Connecticut, as I know, of a certainty——"

"We all know that, for it is a name of weight there; but the Vineyard is the cradle of the breed. The man has a Vineyard look about him, too. I dare say, now, he has not been home for many a day."

The deacon was in an agony. He was menaced with the very thing he was in the hope of staving off, or a discussion on the subject of the sick man's previous life. The doctor was so mercurial and quick of apprehension, that, once fairly on the scent, he was nearly certain he would extract everything from the patient. This was the principal reason why the deacon did not wish to send for him; the expense, though a serious objection to one so niggardly, being of secondary consideration when so many doubloons were at stake. It was necessary, however, to talk on boldly, as any appearance of hesitation might excite the doctor's distrust. The answers, therefore, came instantaneously.

"It may be as you say, doctor," returned the deacon; "for them Vineyard folks (Anglicé folk) are great wanderers."

"That are they. I had occasion to pass a day there, a few years since, on my way to Boston, and I found five women on the island to one man. It must be a particularly conscientious person who could pass a week there, and escape committing the crime of bigamy. As for your bachelors, I have heard that a poor wretch of that description, who unluckily found himself cast ashore there, was married three times the same morning."

As the doctor was a little of a wag, Deacon Pratt did not deem it necessary religiously to believe all that now escaped him; but he was glad to keep him in this vein, in order to prevent his getting again on the track of Daggett's early life. The device succeeded, Martha's Vineyard being a standing joke for all in that quarter of the world, on the subject of the ladies.

Mary was in the porch to receive her uncle and the physician. It was unnecessary for her to ask any questions, for her speaking countenance said all that was required, in order to obtain an answer.

"He's in a bad way, certainly, young lady," observed the doctor, taking a seat on one of the benches, "and I can give no hope. How long he may live is another matter. If he has friends whom he wishes to see, or if he has any affairs to settle, the truth should be told him at once, and no time lost."

"He knows nothing of his friends," interrupted the deacon, quite thrown off his guard by his own eagerness, and unconscious, at the moment, of the manner in which he was committing himself on the subject of a knowledge of the sick man's birthplace, "not having been on the Vineyard, or heard from there, since he first left home, quite fifty years since."

The doctor saw the contradiction, and it set him thinking and conjecturing, but he was too discreet to betray himself. An explanation there probably was, and he trusted to time to ascertain it.

"What has become of Captain Gar'ner?" he asked, looking curiously around, as if he expected to find him tied to the niece's apron-string.

Mary blushed, but she was too innocent to betray any real confusion.

"He has gone back to the schooner, in order to have the boat ready for your return."

"And that return must take place, young lady, as soon as I have drunk two cups of your tea. I have patients at the Harbor who must yet be visited this evening, and the wind goes down with the sun. Let the poor man take the draughts I have left for him—they will soothe him, and help his breathing—more than this my skill can do nothing for him. Deacon, you need say nothing of this visit—I am sufficiently repaid by the air, the sail, and Miss Mary's welcome. I perceive that she is glad to see me, and that is something, between so young a woman and so old a man. And now for the two cups of tea."

The tea was drunk, and the doctor took his leave, shaking his head as he repeated to the niece that the medical science could do nothing for the sick man.

"Let his friends know his situation at once, deacon," he said, as they walked toward the wharf where the whale-boat was all ready for a start. "There is not an hour to lose. Now I think of it, the *Flash*, Captain Smith, is to take a cargo of oil to Boston, and sails to-morrow. I can write a line by her, as it is ten to one she will go into the Hole. All our craft get into that Hole, or into Tarpaulin Cove, before they venture across the Shoals; and a letter addressed to any person of the name of Daggett might find the right man. I'll write it this very evening."

The announcement of this intention threw the deacon into a cold-sweat, but he did not think it prudent to say aught against it. He had bought the *Sea Lion*, engaged Roswell Gardiner, and otherwise expended a large sum of money, in the expectation of handling those doubloons, to say nothing of the furs; and here was a chance of all his calculations being defeated by the interference of impertinent and greedy relatives! There was no remedy but patience, and this the deacon endeavored to exercise.

Deacon Pratt did not accompany the doctor beyond the limits of his own orchard. It was not deemed seemly for a member of the meeting to be seen walking out on the Sabbath, and this was remembered in season to prevent neighborly comments. It is true the *doctor* might furnish an apology; but you strictly religious people, when they undertake the care of other people's consciences, do not often descend to these particulars.

No sooner had Gardiner and the physician re-embarked, than the deacon returned to the cottage of the Widow White.

Here he had another long and searching discourse with the sick mariner. Poor Daggett was wearied with the subject; but Dr. Sage's predictions of an early termination of the case, and the possibility that kinsmen might cross over from the "Vineyard," in order to learn what the long-absent man had in his possession, acted on him as keen incentives. By learning the most material facts now, the *Sea Lion* might get so far ahead of all competitors as to secure the prizes, even should Daggett let others into the secret, and start another vessel on the same expedition. His own schooner was nearly ready for sea, whereas time would be needed in order to make an entire outfit.

But Daggett did not appear to be disposed to be more communicative than heretofore. He went over the narrative of the discovery of the sealing-island, and gave a graphic account of the number and tame condition of the animals who frequented it. A man might walk in their midst without giving the smallest alarm. In a word, all that a gang of good hands would have to do would be to kill and skin, and secure the oil. It would be like picking up dollars on a sea-beach. Sadly! sadly! indeed, was the deacon's cupidity excited by this account; a vivid picture of whales or seals having some such effect on the imagination of a true Suffolk County man, or more properly on that of an East-ender, as those who live beyond Riverhead are termed, as a glowing account of a prairie covered with wheat has on that of a Wolverine or a Buckeye; or an enumeration of cent. per cent. has on the feelings of a Wall Street broker. Never before had Deacon Pratt been so much "exercised" with a love of Mammon. The pirate's tale, which was also recapitulated with much gusto, scarce excited him as much as Daggett's glowing account of the number, condition, and size of the seals.

Nothing was withheld but the latitudes and longitudes. No art of the deacon's, and he practiced many, could extort from the mariner these most material facts, without which all the rest were useless; and the old man worked himself into a fever almost as high as that which soon came over Daggett in the effort to come at these facts—but all in vain.

At that hour the pulse of the sick man usually quickened; but on this occasion it fairly thumped. He had excited himself as well as his listener; and the inconsiderate manner in which both had yielded up their energies to these enticing images of wealth contributed largely to increase the evil. At length exhaustion came to put an end to the scene, which was getting to be dramatic as well as revolting.

So conscious was the deacon on returning home that evening, that his mind was not in such a condition as it behooved him to keep it on the Lord's day, that he was afraid to encounter the placid eye of his devout and single-minded niece. Instead of joining her and uniting in the services that were customary at that hour, he walked in the adjoining orchard until near nine o'clock. Mammon was uppermost in the place of the Deity, and habit offered too strong a barrier to permit him to bring, as it were, the false god openly into the presence of the true.

CHAPTER IV.

"Oh! mourn not for them, their grief is o'er,
Oh! weep not for them, they weep no more;
For deep is their sleep, though cold and hard
Their pillow may be in the old kirk-yard."

—BAYLY.

EARLY on the succeeding morning the whole household of Deacon Pratt, himself included, were up and doing. It was as the sun came up out of the waters that Mary and her uncle met in the porch, as if to greet each other.

"Yonder comes the Widow White, and seemingly in a great hurry," said the niece, anxiously. "I am afraid her patient is worse!"

"He seemed better when I left him last evening, though a little tired with talking," returned the uncle. "The man *would* talk, do all I could to stop him. I wanted to get but two or three words from him, and he used a thousand, without once using the few I wished most to

hear. A talking man is that Daggett, I can tell you, Mary!"

"He'll never talk ag'in, deacon!" exclaimed the Widow White, who had got so near as to hear the concluding words of the last speaker—"He'll never say good or evil more!"

The deacon was so confounded as to be speechless. As for Mary, she expressed her deep regrets that the summons should have been so sudden, and that the previous preparation was so small; matters that gave her far more concern than any other consideration. They were not long left to conjectures, the voluble widow soon supplying all the facts that had occurred. It appeared that Daggett died in the night, the widow having found him stiff and cold on visiting his bedside a few minutes before. That this somewhat unexpected event, as to the time at least, was hastened by the excitement of the conversation mentioned, there can be little doubt, though no comment was made on the circumstance. The immediate cause of death was suffocation from the effects of suppuration, as so often occurs in rapid consumption.

It would be representing Deacon Pratt as a worse man than he actually was, to say that this sudden death had no effect on his feelings. For a short time it brought him back to a sense of his own age, and condition, and prospects. For half an hour these considerations troubled him, but the power of Mammon gradually resumed its sway, and the unpleasant images slowly disappeared in others that he found more agreeable. Then he began seriously to bethink him of what the circumstances required to be done.

As there was nothing unusual in the death of Daggett, the investigations of the coroner were not required. It was clearly a natural, though a sudden death. It remained, therefore, only to give directions about the funeral, and to have an eye to the safe-keeping of the effects of the deceased. The deacon assumed the duty of taking charge of everything. The chest of Daggett was removed to his house for safe-keeping, the key having been taken from the pocket of his vest, and the necessary orders were given for the final disposition of the body.

The deacon had another serious, and even painful half hour, when he first looked upon the corpse. There it lay, a senseless shell, deserted by its immortal tenant, and totally unconscious of that subject which had so lately and so intensely interested them both. It appeared as if the ghastly countenance expressed its sense of the utter worthlessness of all earthly schemes of wealth and happiness. Eternity seemed stamped upon the pinched and sunken features; not eternity in the sense of imperishable matter, but in the sense of the fate of man. Had all the gold of the Indies laid within his reach, the arm of Daggett was now powerless to touch it. His eye could no longer gloat upon treasure, nor any part of his corporeal system profit by its possession. A more striking commentary on the vanity of human wishes could not, just then, have been offered to the consideration of the deacon. His moral being was very strangely constituted. From early childhood he had been accustomed to the cant of religion; and, in many instances, impressions had been made on him that produced effects that it was easy to confound with the fruits that real piety brings forth.

This is a result that we often find in a state of society in which appearances are made to take the place of reality. What is more, it is a result that we may look for equally among the formalists of established sects, and among the descendants of those who once deserted the homes of their fathers in order to escape from the impiety of so meretricious an abuse of the substance of godliness. In the case of the latter, appearances occupy the mind more than that love of God which is the one great test of human conversion from sin to an improving state of that holiness, without which we are told no man shall see his Creator; without which, indeed, no man could endure to look upon that dread Being face to face.

The deacon had all the forms of godliness in puritanical perfection. He had never taken the "name of his God in

vain," throughout the course of a long life; but he had abstained from this revolting and gratuitous sin, more because it was a part of the teachings of his youth so to do, and because the neighbors would have been shocked at its commission, than because he felt the deep reverence for his Maker, which it became the insignificant being that was the work of His hand to entertain; and which would, of itself, most effectually have prevented any wanton use of His holy name, let the neighbors feel or think as they might on the subject. In this way Deacon Pratt might be said to have respected most of the commands of the Decalogue; not, however, because the spirit of God impelled him, through love, to reverence and obey, but because he had been brought up in a part of the country where it was considered seemly and right to be moral, to the senses, at least, if not to the all-seeing eye above.

It was in this way that the deacon had arrived at his preferment in the meeting. He had all the usual sectarian terms at the end of his tongue; never uttered a careless expression; was regular at meeting; apparently performed all the duties that his church required of its professors, in the way of mere religious observances; yet was he as far from being in that state which St. Paul has described succinctly as "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," as if he had been a pagan. It was not the love of God that was active in his soul, but the love of self; and he happened to exhibit his passion under these restrained and deceptive forms, simply because he had been born and educated in a state of society where they composed an integral part of existence. Covetousness was the deacon's besetting sin; and, as it is a vice that may be pretty well concealed, with a little attention to appearances, it was the less likely to expose him to comments than almost any other sin. It is true, that the neighborhood sometimes fancied him "close," or, as they expressed it, "cluss," and men got to look sharply to their own interests in their dealings with him; but, on the whole, there was perhaps more reason to apprehend, in such a community, that the example of so good a man should be accepted as authority, than that his acts should impeach his character, or endanger his standing.

Very different were the situation, feelings, and motives of the niece. She devoutly loved God, and, as a consequence, all of those whom He had created and placed around her. Her meek and gentle spirit led her to worship in sincerity and truth; and all that she thought, said, and did, was under the correction of the principles such motives could best produce. Her woman's love for Roswell Gardiner alone troubled her otherwise happy and peaceful existence. That, indeed, had caused her more than once to falter in her way; but she struggled with the weakness, and had strong hopes of being able to overcome it. To accept of any other man as a husband was, in her eyes, impossible; with the feelings she was fully conscious of entertaining toward him, it would have been both indelicate and unjust; but to accept *him*, while he regarded the Redeemer as only man, however pure and exalted, she felt would be putting herself willingly, or willfully, into the hands of the great enemy of her salvation. Often and often had she prayed for her lover, even more devoutly, and with hotter tears, than she had ever prayed for herself; but, so far as she could discover, without any visible fruits. His opinions remained unchanged, and his frank nature forbade him from concealing their state from Mary. In this way, then, was unhappiness stealing on the early and innocent hours of one who might, otherwise, have been so contented and blessed. It formed a somewhat peculiar feature in her case, that her uncle favored the views of her suitor. This rendered the trials of the niece so much the more severe, as she had no other judgment to sustain her than her own, fortified as that was, however, by the consciousness of right, and the support of that great Power which never deserts the faithful.

Such was the state of feeling among some of the principal actors of our tale, when the sudden death of Daggett

occurred. The body was not removed from the house of the Widow White, but the next morning it was conveyed to the "grave-yard"—"church-yard" would have sounded too episcopal—and interred in a corner that was bestowed on the unhonored and unknown. It was then, only, that the deacon believed he was the sole depository of the important secrets. He had the charts in his possession, and no more revelations could pass the lips of Daggett. Should the friends of the deceased sailor hear of his death, and come to look after his effects, there was very little probability of their finding anything among them to furnish a clew to either the new sealing ground, or to the buried treasure of the pirate. In order to be secured, he even went a little beyond his usual precautions, actually discharging all indebtedness of the deceased to the Widow White out of his own pocket, by giving to her the sum of ten dollars. This was handsome compensation in her eyes as well as in his, and he quieted the suspicions so great and unusual an act of liberality would be apt to awaken, by saying, "he would look to the friends, or if they failed him, to the effects, for his returns; for it was better he should lose by the stranger than a lone widow." He also paid for the coffin, the digging of the grave, and the other light expenses of the interment. In a word, the deacon endeavored to hush all impertinent inquiries by applying the salve of silver wherever it was needed.

The chest had been removed to a large, light closet, that communicated with the deacon's own room. When all his accounts were settled, thither he repaired, armed with the key that was to expose so much treasure to his longing eyes. Some slight qualms arose, after he had locked himself in the room, touching the propriety of his opening the chest. It was not his, certainly; but he put such a construction on the nature of the revelations of Daggett, as he thought would fully justify him in proceeding. He had purchased the schooner expressly to go in quest of the seals and the treasure. This he had done with Daggett's knowledge and acquiescence; nor did he conceive that his own rights were lessened by the mariner's decease. As for himself, the deacon had never believed that the Martha's Vineyard man could accompany the expedition, so that his presence or absence could have no influence on his own rights. It is true, the deacon possessed no direct legal transfer of the charts; but he inferred that all the previous circumstances gave him sufficient claims to justify him in, at least, looking into their contents.

It was a solemn, as well as an anxious moment to the deacon, when he first raised the lid of the chest. Solemn, because it was not possible to forget the recent decease of its late owner, and anxious, inasmuch as he had no certainty that he should find, even on the charts, the places of which he sought the latitudes and longitudes. Certainly, nothing like treasure presented itself to his eyes, when all that Daggett had left behind him lay exposed to view. The chest of a common sailor is usually but ill-furnished, unless it may be just after his return from a long and well-paid voyage, and before he has had time to fall back on his purchases of clothes, as a fund to supply his cravings for personal gratification. This of Daggett's formed no exception to the rule. The few clothes it contained were of the lightest sort, having been procured in warm climates, and were well worn, in addition. The palms, needles, and shells, and carving in whalebone, had all been sold to meet their owner's wants, and nothing of that sort remained. There were two old, dirty, and ragged charts, and on these the deacon laid his hands, much as the hawk, in its swoop, descends on his prey. As it did, however, a tremor came over him, that actually compelled him to throw himself into a chair, and to rest for a moment.

The first of the charts opened, the deacon saw, at a glance, was that of the antarctic circle. There, sure enough, was laid down in ink, three or four specks for islands, with lat.—°,—′, and long.—°,—′, written out at its side. We are under obligations not to give the figures that stand on the chart, for the discovery is

deemed to be important, by those who possess the secret, even to the present hour. We are at liberty to tell the whole story, with this one exception; and we shall proceed to do so, with a proper regard to the pledges made in the premises.

The deacon scarcely breathed, as he assured himself of the important fact just mentioned, and his hands trembled to such a degree as to fairly cause the paper of the chart to rattle. Then he had recourse to an expedient that was strictly characteristic of the man. He wrote the latitude and longitude in a memorandum-book that he carried on his person; after which he again sat down, and with great care erased the islands and the writing from the chart, with the point of a penknife. This done, his mind felt infinitely relieved. Nor was this all. Charts purchased for the schooner were lying on a table in his own room, and he projected on one of them, as well as his skill would allow, the sealing-islands he had just removed from the chart left by Daggett. There he also wrote, in pencil, the important figures that we are commanded not to reveal.

The second chart was then opened. It was of the West Indies, and particularly of certain keys. One of these last was pointed out in a way to leave no doubt that it was meant for the key indicated by the pirate. The same prohibition existing as to this key that exists in respect to the sealing-island, we cannot be more explicit. The writing near this key being in pencil, it was effectually removed by means of india-rubber. When this was done, the deacon used the precaution to rub some material on the clean place made by his knife, on the other chart, when he believed no eye could detect what had just been done. Having marked the proper key on his own chart of the West Indies, he replaced the charts of Daggett in the chest, and locked all up again. The verbal accounts of the sick mariner he had already transferred to paper, and he now believed himself secure of all the information that was necessary to render him the richest man in Suffolk!

When they next met, Mary was surprised at the gayety of her uncle, and that so soon after a funeral. He had a lightened heart, however; for, after leading him on, step by step, until he had gone so far as to purchase and fit out the schooner, Daggett had pertinaciously refused to enter into those minute particulars which it is even now forbidden us to state, and a want of which would have rendered his previous expenditures useless. Death, however, had lifted the veil, and the deacon now believed himself secure in this knowledge.

An hour or two later, Deacon Pratt and his niece was seated, in company with two others, at the dinner-table. The fare was simple, but good. Fish enters largely into the domestic consumption of all those who dwell near the water, in that part of country; and, on that particular occasion, the uncle had, in the lightness of his heart, indulged in what, for him, was a piece of extravagance. In all such regions there are broken-down, elderly men who live by taking fish. Liquor has usually been their great enemy, and all have the same generic character of laziness, shiftless and ill-regulated exertions, followed by much idleness, and fits of intemperance, that in the end commonly cause their death. Such a man fished between Oyster Pond and Shelter Island, being known to all who dwelt within his beat by the familiar appellation of Baiting Joe.

Shortly after the discovery of the latitudes and longitudes on the charts, the deacon had gone to the wharf, in his impatience to see how Roswell Gardiner got on with the *Sea Lion*. The young man, with his gang of hands, was hard at work, and a very material difference was to be observed in the state of the schooner from that in which she was described in our opening chapter. Her rigging had all been set up, every spar was in its place, and altogether she had a look of preparation and completeness. Her water was taking in, and from time to time a country wagon, or an ox-cart, delivered alongside articles belonging to her stores. Of cargo proper, there was none, or next to none; a sealer carrying little besides

salt, and her stores. In a word, the work was rapidly advancing, and "Captain Gar'ner" told his impatient owner that the craft would be ready to put to sea in all that week.

"I have succeeded in engaging the first officer I wanted," added the young man, "and he is now busy in looking up and shipping hands at Stonington. We must get half a dozen reliable men on the main, and then we can take some of our neighbors here as beginners, just to please them."

"Yes, ship a goodly number of green hands," said the deacon, zealously. "They work at cheap 'lays,' and leave the owners the greater profits. Well, well, Captain Gar'ner, things seem to be doing well in your hands, and I will leave you. About two hours after dinner I shall want to have a word with you in private, and will thank you just to step across to the house, where you will be certain to find me. Baiting Joe seems to have hooked something there, in 'arnest."

"That has he! I'll answer for it that he has a sheepshead at the end of his line that will weigh eight or ten pounds."

The words of Gardiner proved true, for Joe actually pulled in a fish of the description and weight he had just mentioned. It was this sight that, in the lightness of his heart, tempted the deacon to a little extravagance. Joe was called ashore, and after a good deal of chaffering, the deacon bought the prize for half a dollar. As Mary was celebrated for her skill in preparing this particular fish, the deacon, before he left the wharf with the sheepshead hanging from one hand, fairly invited "Captain Gar'ner" so to time his visit to the house as to be present at the feast.

Nor was this all. Before the deacon had settled with Joe, the Rev. Mr. Whittle came on the wharf, confessedly in quest of something to eat. The regular occupations of this divine were writing sermons, preaching, holding conferences, marrying, christening, and burying, and hunting up "something to eat." About half of his precious time was consumed in the last of these pursuits. We do not wish to represent this clergyman as having an undue gastronomic propensity; but, as having a due one, and a salary that was so badly paid, as quite to disable him from furnishing his larder, or cellar, with anything worth mentioning, in advance. Now, he was short of flour; then, the potatoes were out; next, the pork was consumed; and always there was a great scarcity of groceries, and other necessaries of that nature. This neglect on the part of the parishioners, coupled with a certain improvidence on that of the pastor, left the clergyman's family completely in that state which is usually described as being in the "from hand to mouth" condition, and which consequently occupied so large a portion of the good man's time in "providing."

Deacon Pratt felt a little conscious and awkward, at encountering the Rev. Mr. Whittle. It was not the fish that caused the first any concern. Fifty times had he met and gone by his pastor, running about with a perplexed and hungry look, when his own hands, or chaise, or wagon, as the case might be, contained enough to render the divine's family happy and contented for a week. No compunctions of that sort ever troubled the deacon's breast. But he had missed the afternoon's meeting in the last Sabbath, a delinquency for which he felt an awkwardness in accounting, while he saw its necessity. The salutations passed as usual, the one party thinking intently on the absence from service, and the other of the sheepshead. Now, it happily occurred to the deacon to invite his pastor also to partake of the fish. There was enough for all; and, though no one on Oyster Pond was much in the habit of entertaining at dinner, it was by no means unusual for the parishioners to have their pastor for a guest. This lucky invitation so occupied the parties that nothing was said about an occurrence so very unusual as the deacon's absence from "meeting" the "last Sabba' day afternoon."

By these simple means the party at table consisted of the deacon himself, Mary, Roswell Gardiner, and the Rev. Mr. Whittle. The fish was excellent, be-

ing so fresh and so skillfully prepared; and Mary was highly complimented by all who ate of it for her share in the entertainment. But Mary Pratt seemed sad. She had not yet recovered from the melancholy feelings awakened by the recent death and funeral; and then her thoughts recurred, with few interruptions, to the long voyage of Roswell, and most especially to the unhappy state of religious belief in which he would undertake so hazardous an expedition. Several times had she hinted to the clergyman her desire that he would "talk to Roswell;" but the good man, though well enough inclined, had really so much to do in "providing," that it was not a very easy matter for him to go beyond the beaten track, in order to probe the consciences of particular individuals. He promised fairly, but always forgot to perform; and in this he imitated closely the example set him by his parishioners in reference to his own salary.

Roswell Gardiner, therefore, remained in his unbelief; or, what was tantamount to it, under the influence of a set of opinions that conflicted with all that the Church had taught since the time of the apostles —at least so thought Mary, and so think we.

On the contrary, the pastor and the deacon were particularly gay for men of their habitual sobriety. Although those were not the days of temperance, *par excellence*, neither of the guests was what might be termed even a moderate drinker. For a novelty in a sailor, Roswell Gardiner seldom touched anything but water, while the other two took their rum and water; but it was in moderation, as all the gifts of God should be used. As for the intemperate cry which makes it a sin to partake of any liquor, however prudently, it was then never heard in the land. On the whole, the clergy of all denominations might be set down as brandy-and-water men, a few occasionally carrying out their principle to exaggeration. But the Rev. Mr. Whittle was a sober man, and, though he saw no great harm in enlivening his heart and cheering his spirits with brandy taken in small quantities, he was never known to be any the worse for his libations. It was the same with the deacon, though *he* drank rum and water of choice; and no other beverage, Mary's currant-wine and cider excepted, was ever seen on his table.

One thing may be said of liquor, whether it be in its favor or not: it usually brings out all there is of the facetious in a man, rendering him conversable and pleasant; for the time being at least. This was apt to be peculiarly the case with the Rev. Mr. Whittle and his deacons. In their ordinary intercourse with their fellow-creatures these good people had taken up the idea that, in order to be religious, their countenances must be somber, and that care and anxiety should be stamped on their faces, just as if th[illegible] had no confidence in the efficacy of the redemption. Few, indeed, are they who vindicate their professions by living at peace with God and man! At Oyster Pond it was much the fashion to imagine that the more a person became impresse[illegible] with the truths of *his*, and particular[illegible] with those of *her*, lost condition, the m[illegible] it became the [illegible]ty to be cynical, and pry into [illegible]ment on, the backslid-i[illegible] the [illegible]munity. This weakness, [illegible]ver, [illegible] characteristic of neither the pastor nor the deacon, each of whom regarded his professions too much in the light of a regular "business trans[illegible]tion," to descend into these little abuses. As for Mary, good creature, her humi[illegible] was so profound as to cause her to bel[illegible] herself among the weakest and [illegible] favored of all who belonged to mee[illegible]

"I was sorry that my late journey [illegible] Connecticut prevented my seeing the [illegible] man who was so suddenly taken [illegible] fro[illegible] house of Widow White, [illegible] serv[illegible] the Rev. Mr. Whittle, some little time after h[illegible] had made his original attack on the sheepshead. "They tell me it was a hopeless case from the first?"

"So Dr. Sage consider[illegible] the deacon. "Capta[illegible] teered to go across [illegible] boat"—with a hea[illegible] po[illegible]sive pronoun— [illegible] lo[illegible] the [illegible]tie[illegible] [illegible]les

be good for consumptive people, as some pretend, I think there is generally little hope for seamen whose lungs once give way."

"The poor man was a mariner, was he? I did not know his calling, but had rather got the impression that he was a husbandman. Did he belong to Oyster Pond?"

"No; we have none of the name of Daggett here, which is a tribe on the Vineyard. Most of the Daggetts are seafaring folks (folk, *Anglicé*), and this man was one of that class, I *believe;* though I known nothing of him, or his pursuits, except by a word, here and there, dropped in discourse."

The deacon thought himself safe in venturing this little departure from the literal truth, inasmuch as no one had been present, or he *thought* no one had ever been present at his many secret conferences with the deceased mariner. Little, however, did he understand the character of the Widow White, if he flattered himself with holding any discourse under her roof in which she was not to participate in its object. So far from this having been the case, the good woman had contrived to obtain, not only a listening-, but a peeping-hole, where she [illegible] and saw most of that which passed between her guest and the deacon. Had her powers of comprehension been equal to her will, or had not her mind been prepossessed with the notion that the deacon *must* be after herself, old Suffolk would have rung with the marvels that were thus revealed. Not only would an unknown Long-island have been laid before the east-enders, but twenty such islands, and seas without number, each of which concealed more hidden treasure than "Gar'ner's Island," Oyster Pond, the Plumb and Fisher's, and all the coasts of the Sound put together; enriched as each and all of these places were thought to be by [illegible] deposits of Kidd.

[illegible] an accident had prevented [illegible]m being circulated. It [illegible]y one occasion Dag- [illegible] and connected in his [illegible] other times his dis- the last [illegible] consisting mor[illegible] in allusions to what had been previously said than in direct and clear revelations. The widow, most unfortunately for her means of information, was with "neighbor Stone" when the connected narrative was given, and all that she knew was disjointed, obscure, and a little contradictory. Still, it was sufficient to set her thinking intensely, and sufficient to produce a material influence on the future fortunes of the *Sea Lion*, as will appear in the sequel.

"It is always a misfortune for a human being to take his departure away from home and friends," observed the Rev. Mr. Whittle. "Here was an immortal soul left to take its last great flight, unsupported, I dare say, except by the prayers of a few pious neighbors. I regret having been absent during the time he was here. Getting home of a Friday only, I was compelled to devote Saturday to preparations for the Sabbath; and Sabbath-night, as I understand it, he departed."

"We are all in the hands of Divine Providence," said the deacon, with a sober mien, "and it is our duty to submit. To my thinking, Oyster Pond catches more than its share of the poor and needy, who are landed from vessels passing east and west, and add considerably to our burdens."

This was said of a spot as much favored by Divine Providence, in the way of abundance, as any other in highly-favored America. Some eight or ten such events as the landing of a stranger had occurred within the last half century, and this was the only instance in which either of them had cost the deacon a cent. But, so little was he accustomed, and so little was he disposed to give, that even a threatened danger of that sort amounted, in his eyes, nearly to a loss.

"Well," exclaimed the literal Roswell Gardiner, "I think, deacon, that we have no great reason to complain. Southold, Shelter Island, and all the islands about here, for that matter, are pretty well off as to poor, and it is little enough that we have to pay for their support."

"That's the idea of a young man who never sees the tax-gatherers," returned

the deacon. "However, there are islands, Captain Gar'ner, that are better off still, and I hope you will live to find them."

"Is our young friend to sail in the *Sea Lion* in quest of any such?" inquired the pastor, a little curiously.

The deacon now repented him of the allusion. But his heart had warmed with the subject, and the rum-and-water had unlocked some of its wards. So timid and nervous had he become, however, that the slightest indication of anything like a suspicion that his secrets were known, threw him into a sweat.

"Not at all—not at all—the captain goes on well-known and beaten ground—Sam, what is wanting, now?"

"Here is Baiting Joe comed up from the wharf, wanting to see master," returned a gray-headed negro, who had formerly been a slave, and who now lived about the place, giving his services for his support.

"Baiting Joe! He is not after his sheepshead, I hope. If he is, he is somewhat late in the day."

"Ay, ay," put in the young sailor, laughing. "Tell him, Sam, that no small part of it is bound to the southward, meaning to cross the line in my company, and that right soon."

"I paid Joe his half-dollar, certainly—*you* saw me pay him, Captain Gar'ner."

"I don't think it's any sich thing, master. There is a stranger with Joe, that he has ferried across from Shelter Island, and *he's* comed up from the wharf, too. Yes—that's it, master."

A stranger! Who could it be? A command was given to admit him, and no sooner did Mary get a sight of his person, than she quietly arose to procure a plate, in order that he, too, might have his share of the fish.

CHAPTER V.

"Stranger! I fled the home of grief,
At Connocht Moran's tomb to fall;
I found the helmet of my chief,
His bow still hanging on our wall."
—CAMPBELL.

"AMPHIBIOUS!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner, in an aside to Mary, as the stranger entered the room, following Baiting Joe's lead. The last only came for his glass of rum-and-water, served with which, by the aid of the negro, he passed the back of his hand across his mouth, napkin-fashion, nodded his "good-day," and withdrew. As for the stranger, Roswell Gardiner's term being particularly significant, it may be well to make a brief explanation.

The word "amphibious" is, or rather *was*, well applied to many of the seamen, whalers, and sealers, who dwelt on the eastern end of Long Island, or the Vineyard, around Stonington, and perhaps we might add, in the vicinity of New Bedford. The Nantucket men had not base enough, in the way of terra firma, to come properly within the category. The class to which the remark strictly applied were sailors without being seamen, in the severe signification of the term. While they could do all that was indispensably necessary to take care of their vessels, were surpassed by no other mariners in enterprise and daring, and hardihood, they knew little about "crowning cables," "carrick-bends," and all the mysteries of "knotting," "gaffing," and "splicing." A regular Delaware Bay seaman would have turned up his nose in contempt at many of their ways, and at much of their real ignorance; but, when it came to the drag, or to the oar, or to holding out in bad weather, or to any of the more manly qualities of the business, he would be certain to yield his respect to those at whom it had originally been his disposition to laugh. It might best describe these men to say that they bore some such relation to the thoroughbred tar as the volunteer bears to the regular soldier.

As a matter of course, the stranger was invited to take his seat at the table. This he did without using many phrases; and Mary had reason to believe, by his appetite, that he thought well of her culinary skill. There was very little of the sheepshead left when this, its last assailant, shoved his plate back, the signal that he could do no more. He then finished a glass of rum-and-water, and seemed to be in a good condition to transact the busi-

ness that had brought him there. Until this moment, he had made no allusion to the motive of his visit, leaving the deacon full of conjectures.

"The fish of Peconic and Gar'ner's is as good as any I know," coolly observed this worthy, after certainly having established some claim to give an opinion on the subject. "We think ourselves pretty well off, in this respect, on the Vineyard——"

"On the Vineyard!" interrupted the deacon, without waiting to hear what was to follow.

"Yes, sir, on Martha's Vineyard, for that's the place I come from. Perhaps I ought to have introduced myself a little more particularly. I come from Martha's Vineyard, and my name is Daggett."

The deacon fairly permitted the knife, with which he was spreading some butter, to fall upon his plate. "Daggett" and the "Vineyard" sounded ominously. Could it be that Dr. Sage had managed to get a message so far, in so short a time; and had this amphibious inhabitant of the neighboring island come already to rob him of his treasure? The perceptions of the deacon, at first, were far from clear; and he even imagined that all he had expended on the *Sea Lion* was thrown away, and that he might be even called on to give some sort of an account, in a court of chancery, of the information obtained from the deceased. A little reflection, however, sufficed to get the better of this weakness, and he made a civil inclination of his head, as much as to tell the stranger, notwithstanding his name and place of residence, that he was welcome. Of course, no one but the deacon himself knew of the thoughts that troubled him, and, after a very brief delay, the guest proceeded with his explanations of the object of his visit.

"The Daggetts are pretty numerous on the Vineyard," continued the stranger, "and when you name one of them, it is not always easy to tell just what family he belongs to. One of our coasters came into the Hull (Holmes' Hole was meant) a few weeks since, and reported that she spoke an inward-bound brig, off New Haven, from which she heard that the people of that craft had put ashore, at Oyster Pond, a seafaring man who belonged to the Vineyard, and who was bound home arter an absence of fifty years, and whose name was Thomas Daggett. The word passed through the island, and a great stir it made among all us Daggetts. There's plenty of our Vineyard people wandering about the 'arth, and sometimes one drops in upon the island, just to die. As most of them that come back bring something with them, it's generally thought a good sign to hear of their arrival. After casting about, and talking with all the old folks, it has been concluded that this Thomas Daggett must be a brother of my father's, who went to sea about fifty years since, and has never been seen or heard of since. He's the only person of the name for whom we can't account, and the family have got me to come across to look him up."

"I am sorry, Mr. Daggett, that you are so late," answered the deacon, slowly, as if unwilling to give pain. "Had you come last week, you might have seen and conversed with your relation; or had you come early this morning, only, you might have attended his funeral. He came among us a stranger, and we endeavored to imitate the conduct of the good Samaritan. I believe he had all the comforts that Oyster Pond can give; and, certainly, he had the best advice. Dr. Sage, of Sag Harbor, attended him in his last illness—Dr. Sage, of the Harbor; doubtless you have heard *him* mentioned?"

"I know him by reputation, and make no doubt all was done that could be done. As the sloop I named lay by the brig some time, in a calm, the two captains had a long talk together; and ours had prepared us to hear of our kinsman's speedy dissolution. He was in a decline when he landed, and we suppose that no human skill could have saved him. As he had so skillful a physician, and one who came so far, I suppose my uncle must have left property?"

This was a home thrust; but, fortunately for the deacon, he had already prepared himself with an answer.

"Seafaring men, that are landed on points and capes from inward-bound vessels, are not very apt to be overloaded with worldly goods," he said, smiling. "When a man prospers in that calling, he usually comes ashore at a wharf, in some large place, and gets into his coach to ride up to some grand tavern! I have remarked, pastor, that seafaring men love comforts and free-living, unaccountably, when they can fairly get a chance at 'em."

"That is natural, deacon—quite natural; and what is natural, is very likely to happen. The natural man loves all sorts of indulgences, and these among others."

As there was no gainsaying this commonplace commentary on the species, it was permitted to pass unanswered.

"I hope my kinsman has not been a burden to any on Oyster Pond?" said the nephew, inquiringly.

"I cannot say that he has," returned the deacon. "He was at little cost at first, and got along by selling a few odd things that he owned. As Providence had placed him in the dwelling of a poor widow, I thought it might be pleasing to the friends—and every man has *some* friends, I suppose—to settle with *her*. This I did, this very morning, taking her receipt in full, as you can see," passing the paper to the stranger. "As a sort of security for my advances, I had the chest of the deceased removed to this house; and it is now upstairs, ready to be examined. It feels light, and I do not think much silver or gold will be found in it."

To own the truth, the Vineyard seaman looked a little disappointed. It was so natural that a man who has been absent fifty years should bring back the fruits of his labor, that he had expected some slight reward for the trouble he was now taking, to be bestowed in this particular form. This, however, was not the specific object of his visit, as will appear as we proceed. Keeping in view his real motive, the nephew continued his inquiries, always putting his questions a little indirectly, and receiving answers that were as evasive and cautious as his own interrogatories.

All this was characteristic of the wary people from which both had sprung, who seldom speak, in a matter of business, without bearing in mind all the possible constructions of what they are saying. After a discourse of some fifteen minutes, in which the history of the chest, in its outlines, was fully given, and during which the stranger produced written evidence of his right to interfere, it was determined to make an inventory, on the spot, of the property left by Daggett, for the benefit of all who might have any interest in it. Accordingly, the whole party, including Mary, was soon assembled in the deacon's own room, with the sea chest placed invitingly in the center. All eyes were fastened on the lid, in curious anticipations of the contents; for, the deacon excepted, all supposed that those contents were a profound secret. The Widow White could have told them better, she having rummaged that chest a dozen times, at least, though without abstracting even a pin. Curiosity had been her ruling motive, far more than cupidity. It is true, the good woman had a prudent regard to her own interests, and felt some anxiety to learn the prospects of her receiving the stipulated price for board—only $1.50 per week—but the sales of the needles, and palms, and carved whalebone, having kept her accounts reasonably square, solicitude on this particular interest was not at its height. No; curiosity, pure female curiosity, a little quickened by the passion which is engendered among the vulgar by the possession of a slight degree of instruction, was really at the bottom of her researches.

Not only had she handled every article in the chest, but she had read, and reread, every paper it contained, half a dozen letters included, and made her own surmises on their nature. Still, the good woman was very little the wiser for her inquiries. Of the great secret she knew absolutely nothing, unless the broken hints collected in her many listenings, could be so considered. But here her ignorance ceased. Every hole in a shirt, every patch in a pair of trowsers, and every darn in a stocking, had been examined, and its probable effect on the value of the gar-

ment duly estimated. The only thing that had escaped her scrutiny was a small till that was locked. Into that she could not look, and there were moments when she would have parted with a finger in order to overhaul it.

"This jacket might sell for a dollar," had the Widow White calculated, "but for the hole in the elbow; and that well patched, would bring seventy-five cents. Them trowsers must have cost two dollars, but they aren't worth half-price now. That pea-jacket is the best article in the chest, and, sent across to the Harbor, about the time the ships are going out, it would bring enough to maintain Daggett a month!"

Such had been the character of the widow's visitations to the chest, though no one knew anything of her discoveries, not even her sister-relict, neighbor Stone.

"Here is the key," said the deacon, producing that instrument from the drawer of a table, as if he had laid it carefully aside for some such moment. "I dare say it will be found to fit, for I remember to have seen Daggett use it once or twice myself."

Roswell Gardiner, as the youngest man, and the one on whom the laboring oar ought to fall, now took the key, applied it to the lock, turned it without difficulty, and then lifted the lid. Disappointment appeared on every face but that of the deacon, at the meager prospect before the company. Not only was the chest more than half empty, but the articles it did contain were of the coarsest materials; well-worn sea clothes that had seen their best days, and which had never been more than the coarse, common attire of a foremast hand.

"There is little here to pay a man for crossing from the Vineyard," observed Roswell Gardiner, a little dryly; for he did not half like the appearance of cupidity that shone through the nephew's tardy concern for the fate of the uncle. "The last voyage has not been prosperous, I fear, or the owners failed before the vessel got in! What is to be done with all this dunnage, deacon?"

"It would be best to take out the contents, article by article," answered the other, "and examine each and all. Now that we have made a beginning with the inventory, it is best to go through with it."

The young man obeyed, calling out the name of each article of dress, as he raised it from its receptacle, and passing it over to him who stood there in the character of a sort of heir-at-law. The last gave each garment a sharp look and prudently put his hand into every pocket, in order to make sure that it was empty, before he laid the article on the floor. Nothing was discovered for some time, until a small key was found in the fob of a pair of old "go-ashore" pantaloons. As there was the till to the chest already mentioned, and a lock on that till, the heir-at-law kept the key, saying nothing touching its existence.

"The deceased does not appear to have been much afflicted with this world's wealth," said the Rev. Mr. Whittle, whose expectations, to own the truth, had been a little disappointed. "This may have been all the better for him, when the moment of departure drew near."

"I dare say he would have borne the burden cheerfully," put in Roswell Gardiner, "to have been a little more comfortable. I never knew a person, seaman or landsman, who was ever the worse for having things snug about him, and for holding on to the better end of his cheer, as long as he could."

"*Your* notion of what is best for man as he draws near to his end, Captain Gar'ner, is not likely to be of the most approved nature. The sea does not produce many very orthodox divines."

The young sailor colored, bit his lip, cast a glance at Mary, and began a nearly inaudible whistle. In a moment he forgot the rebuke he had received, and laughingly went on with the inventory.

"Well," he cried, "this is rather a poorer outfit than Jack is apt to carry! *In*fit, I suppose it should be called, as the poor fellow who owned it was inward bound, when he brought up on Oyster Pond. You'll hardly think it worth

while, Captain Daggett, to take this dunnage across to the Vineyard?"

"It is scarce worth the trouble, though friends and relations may set a value on it that strangers do not. I see a couple of charts there—will you hand them this way, if you please? They may have a value with a seafaring man, as old mariners sometimes make notes that are worth as much as the charts themselves."

This was said very naturally and simply; but it gave the deacon a good deal of concern. Nor was this feeling at all lessened by the earnest, not to say eager manner in which Daggett, as we shall now call this member of the family, spread the chart on the bed, and began to pry into its records. The particular chart first opened in this way, was the one including the antarctic circle, and, of course, was that from which the deacon had been at so much pains to erase the sealing islands that the deceased mariner had laid down with so great precision and care. It was evident that the Martha's Vineyard man was looking for something that he could not find, and that he felt disappointment. Instead of looking at the chart, indeed, he may be said to have been peering at it, in all its holes and crannies, of which there were not a few, in consequence of the torn condition of the paper. Several minutes elapsed ere the investigation terminated, the stranger seeming, all that time, to feel no interest in the remainder of his relation's wardrobe.

"This is an old chart, and of the date of 1802," observed Daggett, raising himself erect, as a man who has long been bent takes the creaks out of his back. "So old a chart as to be of little use nowaday. Our sealers have gone over so much of the ground to the southward of the two capes, as to be able to do much better than this now."

"Your uncle had the appearance of an old-fashioned sailor," coldly observed the deacon; "and it may be that he most liked old-fashioned charts."

"If such was the case he must have pretty well forgotten his Vineyard schooling. There is not a woman there who doesn't know that the latest chart is commonly the best. I own I'm disapp'inted somewhat; for the master of the sloop gave me to understand he had heard from the master of the brig that some valuable information was to be found on the old gentleman's charts."

The deacon started, as here was an indication that the deceased had talked of his knowledge to others, as well as to himself! It was so natural for a man like Daggett to boast of what his charts were worth, that he saw the extreme probability that a difficulty might arise from this source. It was his cue, however, to remain silent, and let the truth develop itself in due course. His attention was not likely to be drawn aside by the shirts and old clothes, for the stranger began a second time to examine the chart, and what was more, in the high latitudes at no great distance from the very spot where the sealing islands had been placed, and from which they had been so carefully erased.

"It is unaccountable that a man should wear out a chart like this, and leave so few notes on it!" said the Vineyard man, much as one complains of a delinquency. "Here is white water noted in the middle of the ocean, where I daresay no other white water was seen but that which is made by a fish, and nothing is said of any islands. What do you think of this, Captain Gar'ner?" laying his finger on the precise spot where the deacon had been at work so long that very morning erasing the islands. "This looks well-fingered, if nothing else, eh?"

"It's a shoal laid down in dirt," answered Roswell Gardiner, laughing. "Let's see; that's about lat. —° —′, and long. —° —′. There can be no known land thereaway, as even Captain Cook did not succeed in getting as far south. That's been a favorite spot with the skipper for taking hold of his chart. I've known one of those old-fashioned chaps put his hand on a chart, in that way, and never miss his holding-ground for three years on a stretch. Mighty go-by-rule people are some of our whaling-masters, in particular, who think they know the

countenances of some of the elderly fish, who are too cunning to let a harpoon get fast to 'em."

"You've been often in them seas, I some think, Captain Gar'ner?" said the other, inquiringly.

"I was brought up in the business, and have a hankering for it yet," returned the young man, frankly. "Nor do I care so much for charts. They are well enough when a vessel is on her road; but, as for whales or seals, the man who wishes to find either, in these times, has to look for them, as I tell my owner. According to reports, the time has been when a craft had only to get an offing to fall in with something that was worth putting a harpoon into; but those days are gone, Captain Daggett; and whales are to be looked after, out at sea, much as money is to be looked for ashore here."

"Is the craft I saw at the wharf fitting out for a whaler, then?"

"She is going after luck, and will accept of it, in whatever form it may turn up."

"She is rather small for the whaling business, though vessels of that size *have* done well, by keeping close in upon our own coast."

"We shall know better what she will do after she has been tried," returned Gardiner, evasively. "What do you think of her for the Banks of Newfoundland?"

The Martha's Vineyard man gave his brother-tar a quick, impatient glance, which pretty plainly said, "tell that to the marines," when he opened the second chart, which as yet had been neglected.

"Sure enough," he muttered, in a low tone, though loud enough to be heard by the keenly attentive deacon; "here it is—a chart of the West Indies, and of all the keys!"

By this casual, spontaneous outbreaking, as it might be, the deacon got another clew to the stranger's knowledge, that gave him increased uneasiness. He was now convinced that, by means of the masters of the brig and the sloop, such information had been sent to the relatives of Daggett as had prepared them to expect the very revelations on which he hoped to establish his own fortunes. To what extent these revelations had been made, of course he could only conjecture; but there must have been a good deal of particularity to induce the individual who had come over to Oyster Pond to look into the two charts so closely. Under the circumstances, therefore, he felicitated himself on the precaution he had so early taken to erase the important notations from the paper.

"Captain Gar'ner, your eyes are younger than mine," said the Vineyard man, holding the chart up to the light—"will you be good enough to look here?—does it not seem as if that key had been noted, and the words rubbed off the chart?"

This caused the deacon to peer over Roswell Gardiner's shoulder, and glad enough was he to ascertain that the stranger had placed his finger on a key that must lie several hundred miles from that which was supposed to hold the buried treasure of the pirates. Something like an erasure did appear at the indicated point; but the chart was so old and dirty, that little satisfaction could be had by examining it. Should the inquirer settle down on the key he evidently had in his eye, all would be well, since it was far enough from the spot really noted.

"It is strange that so old a seafaring man should wear out a chart, and make no observations on it!" repeated the stranger, who was both vexed and at a loss what to conjecture. "All my charts are written over and marked off, just as if I meant to get out an edition for myself."

"Men differ in their tastes and habits," answered Roswell Gardiner carelessly. "Some navigators are forever finding rocks, and white water, and scribbling on their charts, or in the newspapers, when they get back; but I never knew any good come of it. The men who make the charts are most to be trusted. For my part, I would not give a sixpence for a note made by a man who passes a shoal or a rock, in a squall or a gale."

"What would you say to the note of a sealer who should lay down an island where the seals lie about on the beach

like pigs in a pen, sunning themselves? Would you not call a chart so noted, a treasure?"

"That would alter the case, sure enough," returned Gardiner, laughing; "though I should not think of looking into this chest for any such riches. Most of our masters navigate too much at random to make their charts of any great value. They can find the places they look for themselves, but don't seem to know how to tell other people the road. I have known my old man lay down a shoal that he fancied he saw, quite a degree out of the way. Now such a note as that would do more harm than good. It might make a foul wind of a fair one, and cause a fellow to go about, or wear ship, when there was not the least occasion in the world for doing anything of the sort."

"Ay, ay; this will do for nervous men, who are always thinking they see danger ahead; but it is different with islands that a craft has actually visited. I do not see much use, Deacon Pratt, in your giving yourself any further trouble. My uncle was not a very rich man, I perceive, and I must go to work and make my own fortune if I wish more than I've got already. If there is any demand against the deceased, I am ready to discharge it."

This was coming so much to the point that the deacon hardly knew what to make of it. He recollected his own ten dollars, and the covetousness of his disposition so far got the better of his prudence as to induce him to mention the circumstance.

"Dr. Sage may have a charge—no doubt has one, that ought to be settled, but your uncle mainly paid his way as he went on. I thought the widow who took care of him was entitled to something extra, and I handed her ten dollars this morning, which you may repay to me or not, just as you please."

Captain Daggett drew forth his wallet, and discharged the obligation on the spot. He then replaced the charts, and, without opening the till of the chest, he shut down the lid, locked it, and put the key in his pocket, saying that he would cause the whole to be removed, much as if he felt anxious to relieve the deacon of an encumbrance. This done, he asked a direction to the dwelling of the Widow White, with whom he wished to converse ere he left the Point.

"I shall have the questions of so many cousins to answer when I get home;" he said, smiling, "that it will never do for me to go back without taking all the talk I can get with me. If you will be kind enough to show me the way, Captain Gar'ner, I will promise to do as much for you when you come to hunt up the leavings of some old relation on the Vineyard."

Roswell Gardiner very cheerfully complied, not observing the look of dissatisfaction with which his owner listened to the request. Away the two went, then, and were soon at the widow's door. Here the young man left his companion, having duty to attend to on board the *Sea Lion*. The Widow White received her guest with lively interest, it forming one of the greatest pleasures of her existence to be imparting and receiving intelligence.

"I dare say you found my uncle a companionable man," observed the captain, as soon as amicable relations were established between the parties, by means of a few flattering remarks on one side and on the other. "The Vineyard folks are generally quite conversable."

"That he was, Captain Daggett; and when the deacon had not been over to perplex him, and wake up the worldly spirit in him, he was as well inclined to preparation as any sick person I ever waited on. To be sure it *was* different arter the deacon had paid him one of his visits."

"Was Deacon Pratt in the habit of coming to read and pray with the sick?"

"He pray! I don't believe he as much as went through a single sentence of a prayer in all his visits. Their whull talk was about islands and seals when they was by themselves."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the nephew, manifesting a new interest in the discourse. "And what could they find to say on such subjects? Islands and seals were a strange topic for a dying man?"

"I know it," answered the widow, sharply. "I know'd it at the time; but

what could a lone woman do to set 'em right; and he a deacon of the meetin' the whull time? If they *would* talk of worldly things at such times, it wasn't for one like me to put 'em right."

"Then this discourse was held openly in your presence—before your face, as it might be, ma'am?"

"I can't say that it was just that; nor was it altogether when my back was turned. They talked, and I overheard what was said, as will happen when a body is about, you know?"

The stranger did not press the point, having been brought up in what might almost be termed a land of listeners. An island that is cut off from much communication with the rest of the earth, and from which two-thirds of the males must be periodically absent, would be very likely to reach perfection in the art of gossiping, which includes that of the listener.

"Yes," he answered, "one picks up a good deal, he doesn't know how. So they talked of islands and seals?"

Thus questioned, the widow cheerfully opened her stores of knowledge. As she proceeded in her account of the secret conferences between Deacon Pratt and her late inmate her zeal became quickened, and she omitted nothing that she had ever heard, besides including a great deal that she had not heard. But her companion was accustomed to such narratives, and knew reasonably well how to make allowances. He listened with a determination not to believe more than half of what she said, and by dint of long experience, he succeeded in separating the credible portions of the woman's almost breathless accounts from those that ought to have been regarded as incredible, with a surprising degree of success. The greatest difficulty in the way of comprehending the Widow White's report, arose from the fact that she had altogether missed the preliminary and most explicit conference. This left so much to be understood and inferred, that, in her own efforts to supply the deficiencies, she made a great deal of confusion in the statements. Captain Daggett was fully assured that the deacon knew of the existence of the sealing-island, at least; though he was in doubt whether the rumor that had been brought to him, touching the buried treasure, had also been imparted to this person. The purchase and equipment of the *Sea Lion*, taken in connection with the widow's account, were enough of themselves to convince one of his experience and foresight, that an expedition after seal was then fitting out on the information derived from his deceased relative. Of this much he had no doubt; but he was not able to assure himself quite so satisfactorily that the key was to be looked at by the way.

The interview between Captain Daggett and the Widow White lasted more than an hour. In that time the former had gleaned all the information the latter could give, and they parted on the best terms in the world. It is true that the captain gave the widow nothing—he had acquitted his conscience on this score, by repaying the deacon the money the last had advanced—but he listened in the most exemplary manner to all she had to say; and, with a certain class of vehement talkers, the most favored being in the world is your good listener. Interest had given the stranger an air of great attention, and the delighted woman had poured out her torrent of words in a way that gratified, in the highest degree, her intense desire to be imparting information. When they separated, it was with an understanding that letters, on the same interesting subject, should pass between them.

That afternoon, Captain Daggett found means to remove the chest of his late kinsman, across the bays, to Sag Harbor, whither he proceeded himself by the same conveyance. There, he passed an hour or two in making inquiries touching the state of equipment, and the probable time of the departure of the *Sea Lion*. The fitting out of this schooner was the cause of a good deal of discourse in all that region, and the Martha's Vineyard man heard numberless conjectures, but very little accurate information. On the whole, however, he arrived at the conclusion that the *Sea Lion* would sail within the next ten days; that her voyage was to be dis-

tant; that her absence was expected to exceed a twelvemonth; and that it was thought she had some other scheme in view in addition to that of sealing. That night, this hardy mariner—half agriculturist as he was—got into his whale-boat, and sailed for the Vineyard all alone, taking the chest with him. This was nothing, however; for quite often before had he been off at sea, in his boat alone, looking out for inward bound vessels to pilot.

CHAPTER VI.

"Launch thy bark, mariner!
Christian, God speed thee!
Let loose the rudder-bands,
Good angels lead thee!
Set thy sails warily,
Tempests will come;
Steer thy course steadily,
Christian, steer home!"

—MRS. SOUTHEY.

THE visit of Captain Daggett, taken in connection with all that he had said and done, while on Oyster Pond, and at Sag Harbor, had the effect greatly to hasten the equipments of the *Sea Lion*. Deacon Pratt knew the characters of the seamen of the island too well to trifle in a matter of so much moment. How much the Vineyard folks had been told, in reference to his great secrets, he did not know; but he felt assured that they knew enough, and had learned enough in this visit to quicken all their desires for riches, and to set them in motion toward the antarctic circle. With such a people, distance and difficulties are of no account; a man who has been cradling oats to-day, in his own retired fields, where one would think ambition and the love of change could never penetrate, being ready to quit home at twenty-four hours' notice, assuming the marlinspike as he lays aside the fork, and setting forth for the uttermost confines of the earth, with as little hesitation as another might quit his home for an ordinary journey of a week. Such, did the deacon well know, was the character of those with whom he had now to deal, and he foresaw the necessity of the utmost caution, perseverance, diligence, and activity.

Philip Hazard, the mate mentioned by Roswell Gardiner, was enjoined to lose no time; and the men engaged for the voyage soon began to cross the Sound, and to make their appearance on board the schooner. As for the craft herself, she had all that was necessary for her wants below hatches; and the deacon began to manifest some impatience for the appearance of two or three men of particular excellence, of whom Phil Hazard was in quest, and whom Captain Gardiner had made it a point should be obtained. Little did the worthy owner suspect that the Vineyard people were tampering with these very hands, and keeping them from coming to terms, in order that they might fit out a second *Sea Lion*, which they had now been preparing for near a month; having purchased her at New Bedford, with a view to profit by the imperfect information that had reached them, through the masters of the brig and sloop. The identity in the name was accidental, or, it might be better to say, had been naturally enough suggested by the common nature of the enterprise; but, once existing, it had been the means of suggesting to the Vineyard company a scheme of confounding the vessels, out of which they hoped to reap some benefit, but which it would be premature now fully to state.

After a delay of several days, Hazard sent across from Stonington a man by the name of Watson, who had the reputation of being a first-class sealer. This accession was highly prized; and, in the absence of his mates, both of whom were out looking for hands, Roswell Gardiner, to whom command was still novel, consulted freely with this experienced and skillful mariner. It was fortunate for the schemes of the deacon that he had left his young master still in the dark, as respected his two great secrets. Gardiner understood that the schooner was to go after seals, sea-lions, sea-elephants, and all animals of the genus *phoca;* but he had been told nothing concerning the revelations of Daggett or of the real motives that had induced him to go so far out of his usual course, in the pursuit of gain. We say it was fortunate that the

deacon had been so wary; for Watson had no intention whatever to sail out of Oyster Pond, having been actually engaged as the second officer of the rival *Sea Lion*, which had been purchased at New Bedford, and was then in active state of forwardness in its equipments, with a view to compete with the craft that was still lying so quietly and unconsciously alongside of Deacon Pratt's wharf. In a word, Watson was a spy, sent across by the Vineyard-men, to ascertain all he could of the intentions of the schooner's owner, to worm himself into Gardiner's confidence, and to report, from time to time, the state of things generally, in order that the East-enders might not get the start of his real employers.

It is a common boast of Americans that there are no spies in their country. This may be true in the everyday signification of the term, though it is very untrue in all others. This is probably the most spying country in Christendom, if the looking into other people's concerns be meant. Extensive and recognized systems of *espionage* exist among merchants; and nearly every man connected with the press has enlisted himself as a sort of spy in the interests of politics—many, in those of other concerns, also. The reader, therefore, is not to run away with impressions formed under general assertions that will scarce bear investigation, and deny the truth of pictures that are drawn with daguerreotype fidelity, because they do not happen to reflect the cant of the day. The man Watson, who had partially engaged to go out in the *Sea Lion*, Captain Roswell Gardiner, was not only a spy, but a spy sent covertly into an enemy's camp, with the meanest motives, and with intentions as hostile as the nature of the circumstances would permit.

Such was the state of things on Oyster Pond for quite a week after the nephew had been to look after the effects of the deceased uncle. The schooner was now quite ready for sea, and her master began to talk of hauling off from the wharf. It is true, there was no very apparent reason why this step, preliminary to sailing, should be taken in that port, where there were so few opportunities for her people to run into excesses; but it sounded shipshape, and Captain Gardiner had been heard to express an intention to that effect. The men arrived but slowly from the main, and something like impatience was manifested by the young commander, who had long before got all his green hands, or youths from the neighborhood, on board, and was gradually breaking them into the ways of a vessel. Indeed, the best reason he could give to himself for "hauling off," was the practice it might give to these lads with the oars.

"I don't know what Hazard and Green are about," called out Roswell Gardiner to his owner, the first being on the quarter-deck of the *Sea Lion*, and the last on the wharf, while Watson was busy in the main-rigging; "they've been long enough on the main to ship a dozen crews for a craft of this size, and we are still short two hands, even if this man sign the papers, which he has not yet done. By the way, Watson, it's time we saw your handwriting."

"I'm a poor scholar, Captain Gar'ner," returned the cunning mariner, "and it takes time for me to make out even so small a matter as my name."

"Ay, ay; you are a prudent fellow, and I like you all the better for it. But you have had leisure, and a plenty of it, too, to make up your mind. You must know the schooner from her keel up by this time, and ought to be able to say now that you are willing to take luck's chances in her."

"Ay, ay, sir; that's all true enough, so far as the craft is concerned. If this was a West India v'y'ge, I wouldn't stand a minute about signing the articles; nor should I make much question if the craft was large enough for a common whalin' v'y'ge; but sealin' is a different business, and one onprofitable hand may make many an onprofitable lay."

"All this is true enough; but we do not intend to take any unprofitable hands, or to have any unprofitable lays. You know me——"

"Oh! if all was like *you*, Captain Gar'-

ner, I wouldn't stand even to wipe the pen. *Your* repitation was made in the southward, and no man can dispute your skill."

"Well, both mates are old hands at the business, and we intend that all the 'ables' shall be as good men as you are yourself."

"It *needs* good men, sir, to be operatin' among some of them sea-elephants! Sea-dogs; for sea-dogs is my sayin'. They tell of seals getting scurce; but I say, it's all in knowin' the business.—'There's young Captain Gar'ner,' says I, 'that's fittin' out a schooner for some onknown part of the world,' says I, 'maybe for the South Pole, forti-know, or for some sich out-of-the-way hole; now he'll come back *full*, or I'm no judge o' the business,' says I."

"Well, if this is your way of thinking, you have only to clap your name to the articles, and take your lay."

"Ay, ay, sir; when I've seed my shipmates. There isn't the business under the sun that so much needs that every man should be true, as the sea-elephant trade. Smaller animals may be got along with, with a narvous crew, perhaps; but when it comes to the raal old bulls, or bulldogs, as a body might better call 'em, give me stout hearts, as well as stout hands."

"Well, now, to my notion, Watson, it is less dangerous to take a sea-elephant than to fasten to a regular old bull-whale, that maybe has had half a dozen irons in him already."

"Yes, sir, *that's* sometimes skeary work, too; though I don't think so much of a whale as I do of a sea-elephant, or of a sea-lion. 'Let me know my shipmates,' say I, 'on a sealin' expedition.'"

"Captain Gar'ner," said the deacon, who necessarily overheard this discourse, "you ought to know at once whether this man is to go in the schooner or not. The mates believe he is, and may come across from the main without a hand to take his place, should he leave us. The thing should be settled at once."

"I'm willing to come to tarms this minute," returned Watson, as boldly as if he were perfectly sincere; "only let me understand what I undertake. If I know'd to what islands the schooner was bound, it might make a difference in my judgment."

This was a well-devised question of the spy's, though it failed of its effect, in consequence of the deacon's great caution in not having yet told his secret, even to the master of his craft. Had Gardiner known exactly where he was about to go, the desire to secure a hand as valuable as Watson might have drawn from him some imprudent revelation; but knowing nothing himself, he was obliged to make the best answer he could.

"Going," he said; "why, we are going after seals, to be sure; and shall look for them where they are most to be found. As experienced a hand as yourself ought to know where that is."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered the fellow, laughing—"it's just neither here nor there—that's all."

"Captain Gar'ner," interrupted the deacon, solemnly, "this is trifling, and we must come to terms with this man, or write to Mr. Hazard to engage another in his place. Come ashore, sir; I have business with you up at the house."

The serious manner in which this was uttered took both the captain and the man a little by surprise. As for the first, he went below to conceal his good-looking throat beneath a black handkerchief, before he followed the deacon where it was most probable he should meet with Mary. While he was thus occupied, Watson came down out of the main-rigging and descended into the forecastle. As the young captain was walking fast toward the dwelling of Deacon Pratt, Watson came on deck again, and hailed Baiting Joe, who was fishing at no great distance from the wharf. In a few minutes Watson was in Joe's boat, bag and all—he had not brought a chest on board—and was under way for the Harbor. From the Harbor he sailed the same evening, in a whale-boat that was kept in readiness for him, carrying the news over to Holmes's Hole that the *Sea Lion*, of Oyster Pond, would certainly be ready

to go out as early as the succeeding week. Although Watson thus seemingly deserted his post, it was with a perfect understanding with his real employers. He had need of a few days to make his own preparations before he left the 41st degree of north latitude to go as far south as a vessel could proceed. He did not, however, leave his post entirely vacant. One of Deacon Pratt's neighbors had undertaken, for a consideration, to let the progress of events be known, and tidings were sent by every opportunity, reporting the movements of the schooner, and the prospects of her getting to sea. These last were not quite as flattering as Roswell Gardiner had hoped and believed, the agents of the Vineyard company having succeeded in getting away two of Hazard's best men; and as reliable sealers were not to be picked up as easily as pebbles on a beach, the delay caused by this new stroke of management might even be serious. All this time the *Sea Lion*, of Holmes's Hole, was getting ahead with untiring industry, and there was every prospect of her being ready to go out as soon as her competitor. But to return to Oyster Pond.

Deacon Pratt was in his porch ere Roswell Gardiner overtook him. There the deacon gave his young friend to understand he had private business of moment, and led the way at once into his own apartment, which served the purposes of office, bedroom, and closet; the good man being accustomed to put up his petition to the throne of Mercy there, as well as transact all his temporal affairs. Shutting the door, and turning the key, not a little to Roswell's surprise, the old man faced his companion with a most earnest and solemn look, telling him at once that he was now about to open his mind to him in a matter of the last concern. The young sailor scarce knew what to think of it all; but he hoped that Mary was, in some way, connected with the result.

"In the first place, Captain Gar'ner," continued the deacon, "I must ask you to take an oath."

"An oath, deacon! This is quite new for the sealing ousiness—as ceremonious as Uncle Sam's people."

"Yes, sir, an oath; and an oath that must be most religiously kept, and on this Bible. Without the oath, our whole connection must fall through, Captain Gar'ner."

"Rather than that should happen, deacon, I will cheerfully take two oaths; one to clench the other."

"It is well. I ask you, Roswell Gar'ner, to swear on this Holy Book that the secrets I shall now reveal to you shall not be told to any other, except in a manner prescribed by myself; that in no other man's employment will you profit by them; and that you will in all things connected with them be true and faithful to your engagements to me and to my interests—so help you God!"

Roswell Gardiner kissed the book, while he wondered much, and was dying with curiosity to know what was to follow. This great point secured, the deacon laid aside the sacred volume, opened a drawer, and produced the two all-important charts, to which he had transferred the notes of Daggett.

"Captain Gar'ner," resumed the deacon, spreading the chart of the antarctic sea on the bed, "you must have known me and my ways long enough to feel some surprise at finding me, at my time of life, first entering into the shipping concern."

"If I've felt any surprise, deacon, it is that a man of your taste and judgment should have held aloof so long from the only employment that I think fit for a man of real energy and character."

"Ay, this is well enough for you to say, as a seaman yourself; though you will find it hard to persuade most of those who live on shore into your own ways of thinking."

"That is because people ashore think and act as they have been brought up to do. Now just look at that chart, deacon; see how much of it is water, and how little of it is land. Minister Whittle told us only the last Sabbath, that nothing was created without a design, and that a wise dispensation of Divine Providence was to be seen in all the works of nature. Now if the land was intended to take the lead

of the water, would there have been so much more of the last than of the first, deacon? That was the idea that came into my mind when I heard the minister's words; and had not Mary——"

"What of Mary?" demanded the deacon, seeing that the young man paused.

"Only I was in hopes that what you had to say, deacon, might have some connection with her."

"What I have to say is better worth hearing than fifty Marys. As to my niece, Gar'ner, you are welcome to her, if she will have you; and why she does not is to me unaccountable. But, you see that chart—look at it well, and tell me if you find anything new or remarkable about it."

"It looks like old times, deacon, and here are many places that I have visited and know. What have we here? Islands laid down in pencil, with the latitude and longitude in figures! Who says there is land thereaway, Deacon Pratt, if I may be so free as to ask the question?"

"I do—and capital good land it is for a sealing craft to get alongside of. Them islands, Gar'ner, may make your fortune, as well as mine. No matter how I know they are there—it is enough that I *do* know it, and that I wish you to carry the *Sea Lion* to that very spot, as straight as you can go; fill her up with elephant's oil, ivory, and skins, and bring her back again as fast as she can travel."

"Islands in that latitude and longitude!" said Roswell Gardiner, examining the chart as closely as if it were of very fine print indeed—"I never heard of any such land before!"

"'Tis there, notwithstanding; and like all land in distant seas that men have not often troubled, plentifully garnished with what will pay the mariner well for his visit."

"Of that I have little doubt, should there be actually any land there. It may be a Cape Fly Away that some fellow has seen in thick weather. The ocean is full of such islands!"

"This is none of them. It is bony fidy 'arth, as I know from the man who trod it. You must take good care, Gar'ner, and not run the schooner on it,"—with a small, chuckling laugh, such as a man little accustomed to this species of indulgence uses when in high good humor. "I am not rich enough to buy and fit out *Sea Lions* for you to cast 'em away."

"That's high latitude, deacon, to carry a craft into. Cook himself fell short of *that* somewhat!"

"Never mind Cook—he was a king's navigator—my man was an American sealer; and what he has once seen he knows where to find again. There are the islands—three in number; and there you will find 'em, with animals on their shores as plenty as clam-shells on the south beach."

"I hope it may be so. If land is there, and you'll risk the schooner, I'll try to get a look at it. I shall want you to put it down in black and white, however, that I'm to go as high as this."

"You shall have any authority a man may ask. On that point there can be no difficulty between me and you. The risk of the schooner must be mine, of course; but I rely on you to take as good care of her as a man can. Go, then, direct to that point, and fill up the schooner. But, Gar'ner, my business doesn't end with this! As soon as the schooner is full you will come to the southward, and get her clear of everything like ice as fast as possible."

"That I should be very likely to do, deacon, though you had said nothing on the subject."

"Yes, by all accounts them are stormy seas, and the sooner a body is shut of them the better. And now, Gar'ner, I must swear you again. I have another secret to tell you, and an oath must go with each. Kiss this sacred volume once more, and swear to me never to reveal to another that which I am about to reveal to you, unless it may be in a court of law, and at the command of justice, so help you God!"

"What, a second oath, deacon!—You are as bad as the custom houses, which take you on all tacks, and don't believe you when you've done. Surely, I'm sworn in already."

"Kiss the book, and swear to what I have put to you," said the deacon, sternly, "or never go to sea in a craft of mine. Never to reveal what I shall now tell you, unless compelled by justice, so help you God!"

Thus cornered, Roswell Gardiner hesitated no longer, but swore as required, kissing the book gravely and reverently. This was the young man's first command, and he was not going to lose it on account of so small a matter as swearing to keep his owner's secrets. Having obtained the pledge, the deacon now produced the second chart, which was made to take the place of the other on the bed.

"There!" he exclaimed, in a sort of triumph—"that is the real object of your voyage!"

"That key! Why, deacon, that is in north latitude —° —′, and you make a crooked road of it, truly, when you tell me to go as far south as —° —′, in order to reach it."

"It is well to have two strings to a body's bow. When you hear what you are to bring from that key, you will understand why I send you south, before you are to come here to top off your cargo."

"It must be with turtle, then," said Roswell Gardiner, laughing. "Nothing grows on these keys but a few stunted shrubs, and nothing is ever to be found on them but turtle. Once in a while a fellow may pick up a few turtle, if he happen to hit the right key."

"Gar'ner," rejoined the deacon, still more solemnly—"that island, low and insignificant as it is, contains treasure. Pirates made their deposits here a long time ago, and the knowledge of that fact is now confined to myself."

The young man stared at the deacon as if he had some doubts whether the old man were in his right mind. He knew the besetting weakness of his character well, and had no difficulty in appreciating the influence of such a belief as that he had just expressed, on his feelings; but it seemed so utterly improbable that he, living on Oyster Pond, should learn a fact of this nature, which was concealed from others, that, at first, he fancied his owner had been dreaming of money until its images had made him mad. Then he recollected the deceased mariner, the deacon's many conferences with him, the interest he had always appeared to take in the man, and the suddenness, as well as the time, of the purchase of the schooner; and he at once obtained a clew to the whole affair.

"Daggett has told you this, Deacon Pratt," said Gardiner, in his off-hand way. "And he is the man who has told you of those sealing-islands, too!"

"Admitting it to be so, why not Daggett as well as any other man?"

"Certainly, if he knew what he was saying to be true—but the yarn of a sailor is not often to be taken for gospel."

"Daggett was near his end, and cannot be classed with those who talk idly in the pride of their health and strength—men who are ever ready to say, 'Tush, God has forgotten.'"

"Why was this told to you, when the man had natural friends and relatives by the dozen over on the Vineyard?"

"He had been away from the Vineyard and them relatives fifty years; a length of time that weakens a body's feelings considerably. Take you away from Mary only a fourth part of that time, and you would forget whether her eyes are blue or black, and altogether how she looks."

"If I should, a most miserable and contemptible dog should I account myself! No, deacon, twice fifty years would not make me forget the eyes or the looks of Mary!"

"Ay, so all youngsters think, and feel, and talk. But let 'em try the world, and they'll soon find out their own foolishness. But Daggett made me his confidant because Providence put me in his way, and because he trusted to be well enough to go in the schooner, and to turn the expedition to some account in his own behalf."

"Had the man the impudence to confess that he had been a pirate, and helped to bury treasure on this key?"

"That is not, by any means, his history. Daggett was never a pirate himself, but

accident placed him in the same prison and same room as that in which a real pirate was confined. There the men became friends, and the condemned prisoner, for such he was in the end, gave this secret to Daggett as the last service he could do him."

"I hope, deacon, you do not expect much in the way of profit from this part of the voyage?"

"I expect the most from it, Gar'ner, as you will, too, when you come to hear the whole story."

The deacon then went into all the particulars of the revelations made by the pirate to his fellow-prisoner, much as they had been given by Daggett to himself. The young man listened to this account at first with incredulity, then with interest; and finally with a feeling that induced him to believe that there might be more truth in the narrative than he had originally supposed possible. This change was produced by the earnest manner of the deacon as much as by the narrative itself; for he had become graphic under the strong impulses of that which, with him, was a master passion. So deep had been the impression made on the mind of the old man by Daggett's account, and so intense the expectations thereby awakened, that he omitted nothing, observed the most minute accuracy in all his details, and conveyed just as distinct impressions to his listener, as had been conveyed to himself, when the story was first told to him.

"This is a most extr'or'nary account, take it on whatever tack you will!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner, as soon as a pause in the deacon's story enabled him to put in another word. "The most extr'or'nary tale I ever listened to! How came so much gold and silver to be abandoned for so long a time?"

"Them three officers hid it there, fearing to trust their own crew with it in their vessel. Their pretence was to stop for turtle, just as you must do; whilst the hands were turtling, the captain and his mates walked about the key, and took occasion to make their deposits in that hole on the coral rock, as you have heard me say. Oh! it's all too natural not to be true!"

Roswell Gardiner saw that the old man's hopes were too keenly excited to be easily cooled, and that his latent covetousness was thoroughly awakened. Of all the passions to which poor human nature is the slave, the love of gold is that which endures the longest, and is often literally carried with us to the verge of the grave. Indeed, in minds so constituted originally as to submit to an undue love of money, the passion appears to increase, as others more dependent on youth, and strength, and enterprise, and ambition, gradually become of diminished force, slowly but surely usurping the entire sway over a being that was once subject to many masters. Thus had it been with the deacon. Nearly all his passions now centered in this one. He no longer cared for preferment in politics, though once it had been the source of a strong desire to represent Suffolk at Albany; even the meeting, and its honors, were loosening their hold on his mind; while his fellowmen, his kindred included, were regarded by him as little more than so many competitors or tools.

"A lie may be made to seem very natural," answered Roswell Gardiner, "if it has been put together by one who understands knotting and splicing in such matters. Did this Daggett name the amount of the sum that he supposed the pirates may have left on that key?"

"He did," returned the deacon, the whole of his narrow and craving soul seeming to gleam in his two sunken eyes as he answered. "According to the account of the pirate, there could not have been much less than thirty thousand dollars, and nearly all of it in good doubloons of the coin of the kings—doubloons that will weigh their full sixteens to the pound—ay, and to spare!"

"The *Sea Lion's* cargo, well chosen and well stowed, would double that, deacon, if the right animals can only be found."

"Maybe so—but just think, Gar'ner—this will be in good, bright coined gold!"

"But what right can we have to that

gold, even admitting that it is there, and can be found?"

"Right!" exclaimed the deacon, staring. "Does not that which Divine Providence gives man become his own?"

"By the same rule it might be said Divine Providence gave it to the pirates. There must be lawful owners to all this money, if one could only find them."

"Ay, if one could only find them. Harkee, Gar'ner; have you spent a shilling or a quarter lately?"

"A good many of both, deacon," answered the young man, again betraying the lightness of his heart with a laugh. "I wish I had more of your saving temper, and I might get rich. Yes, I spent a quarter only two hours since, in buying fish for the cabin, of old Baiting Joe."

"Well, tell me the impression of that quarter. Had it a head, or only pillars? What was its date, and in whose reign was it struck? Maybe it was from the mint at Philadelphia—if so, had it the old eagle or the new? In a word, could you swear to that quarter, Gar'ner, or to any quarter you ever spent in your life?"

"Perhaps not, deacon. A fellow doesn't sit down to take likenesses, when he gets a little silver or gold."

"Nor is it very probable that any one could say—'that is my doubloon.'"

"Still there must be a lawful owner to each piece of that money, if any such money be there," returned Roswell Gardiner, a little positively. "Have you ever talked with Mary, deacon, on this subject?"

"I talk of such a matter with a woman! Do you think I'm mad, Gar'ner? If I wanted to have the secret run through old Suffo'k, as fire runs over the salt meadows in the spring, I might think of such a thing; but not without. I have talked with no one but the master of the craft that I am about to send out in search of this gold, as well as in search of the sealing-islands, I have shown you. Had there been but *one* object in view, I might not have ventured so much; but with *two* before my eyes, it would seem like flying in the face of Divine Providence to neglect so great an opportunity!"

Roswell Gardiner saw that arguments would avail nothing against a cupidity so keenly aroused. He abstained, therefore, from urging any more of the objections that suggested themselves to his mind, but heard all that the deacon had to tell him, taking full notes of what he heard. It would seem that Daggett had been sufficiently clear in his directions for finding the hidden treasure, provided always that his confidant the pirate had been as clear with him, and had not been indulging in a mystification. The probability of the last had early suggested itself to one of Deacon Pratt's cautious temperament; but Daggett had succeeded in removing the impression by his forcible statements of his friend's sincerity. There was as little doubt of the sincerity of the belief of the Martha's Vineyard mariner, as there was of that of the deacon himself.

The day that succeeded this conference, the *Sea Lion* hauled off from the wharf, and all communications with her were now made only by means of boats. The sudden disappearance of Watson may have contributed to this change—men being more under control with a craft at her moorings than when fast to a wharf. Three days later the schooner lifted her anchor, and with a light air made sail. She passed through the narrow but deep channel which separates Shelter Island from Oyster Pond, quitting the waters of Peconic altogether. There was not an air of departure about her, notwithstanding. The deacon was not much concerned; and some of Roswell Gardiner's clothes were still at his washerwoman's, circumstances that were fully explained, when the schooner was seen to anchor in Gardiner's Bay, which is an outer roadstead to all the ports and havens of that region.

CHAPTER VII.

"Walk in the light! so shalt thou know
That fellowship of love,
His spirit only can bestow
Who reigns in light above.
Walk in the light! and sin, abhorr'd,
Shall ne'er defile again;
The blood of Jesus Christ, the Lord,
Shall cleanse from every stain."
—BERNARD BARTON.

ABOUT an hour after the *Sea Lion*, of Oyster Pond, had let go her anchor in Gardiner's Bay, a coasting sloop approached her, coming from the westward. There are two passages by which vessels enter or quit Long Island Sound, at its eastern termination. The main channel is between Plum and Fisher's Islands, and from the rapidity of its currents, is known by the name of the Race. The other passage is much less frequented, being out of the direct line for sailing for craft that keep mid-sound. It lies to the southward of the Race, between Plum Island and Oyster Pond Point, and is called by the Anglo-Saxon appellation of Plum Gut. The coaster just mentioned had come through this latter passage; and it was the impression of those who saw her from the schooner, that she was bound up into Peconic, or the waters of Sag Harbor. Instead of luffing up into either of the channels that would have carried her into these places, however, she kept off, crossing Gardiner's Bay, until she got within hail of the schooner. The wind being quite light, there was time for the following short dialogue to take place between the skipper of this coaster and Roswell Gardiner, before the sloop had passed beyond the reach of the voice.

"Is that the *Sea Lion*, of Oyster Pond?" demanded the skipper, boldly.

"Ay, ay," answered Roswell Gardiner, in the sententious manner of a seaman.

"Is there one Watson of Martha's Vineyard shipped in that craft?"

"He was aboard here for a week, but left us suddenly. As he did not sign articles, I cannot say that he run."

"He changed his mind, then," returned the other, as one expresses a slight degree of surprise at hearing that which was new to him. "Watson is apt to whiffle about, though a prime fellow, if you can once fasten to him, and get him into blue water. Does your schooner go out to-morrow, Captain Gar'ner?"

"Not till next day, I think," said Roswell Gardiner, with the frankness of his nature, utterly free from the slightest suspicion that he was communicating with one in the interests of rivals. "My mates have not yet joined me, and I am short of my complement by two good hands. Had that fellow Watson stuck by me, I would have given him a look at water that no lead ever sounded."

"Ay, ay; he's a whiffler, but a good man on a sea-elephant. Then you think you'll sail day a'ter to-morrow?"

"If my mates come over from the main. They wrote me yesterday that they had got the hands, and were then on the look-out for something to get across in. I've come out here to be ready for them, and to pick 'em up, that they needn't go all the way up to the Harbor."

"That's a good traverse, and will save a long pull. Perhaps they are in *that* boat."

At this allusion to a boat, Roswell Gardiner sprang into his main rigging, and saw, sure enough, that a boat was pulling directly toward the schooner, coming from the main, and distant only a short half mile. A glass was handed to him, and he was soon heard announcing cheerfully to his men, that "Mr. Hazard and the second officer, were in the boat, with two seamen," and that he supposed they should *now* have their complement. All this was overheard by the skipper of the sloop, who caught each syllable with the most eager attention.

"You'll soon be traveling south, I'm thinking, Captain Gar'ner?" called out this worthy, again, in a sort of felicitating way. "Them's your chaps, and they'll set you up."

"I hope so, with all my heart, for there is nothing more tiresome than waiting when one is all ready to trip. My owner is getting to be impatient, too, and wants to see some skins in return for his dollars."

"Ay, ay, them's your chaps, and you'll be off the day a'ter to-morrow, at the lat-

est. Well, a good time to you, Captain Gar'ner, and a plenty of skinning. It's a long road to travel, especially when a craft has to go as far south as yours is bound!"

"How do you know, friend, whither I am bound? You have not asked me for my sealing-ground, nor is it usual, in our business, to be hawking it up and down the country."

"All that is true enough, but I've a notion, notwithstanding. Now as you'll be off so soon, and as I shall not see you again, for some time at least, I will give you a piece of advice. If you fall *in* with a consort, don't fall *out* with her and make a distant v'y'ge a cruise for an enemy, but come to tarms, and work in company; lay for lay; and make fair weather of what can't be helped."

The men on board the sloop laughed at this speech, while those on board the schooner wondered. To Roswell Gardiner and his people the allusions were an enigma, and the former muttered something about the stranger's being a dunce, as he descended from the rigging and gave some orders to prepare to receive the boat.

"The chap belongs to the Hole," rejoined the master of the schooner; "and all them Vineyard fellows fancy themselves better blue-jackets than the rest of mankind: I suppose it must be because their island lies further out to sea than anything we have here inside of Montauk."

Thus ended the communications with the stranger. The sloop glided away before a light south wind, and, favored by an ebb-tide, soon rounded the spit of sand that shelters the anchorage; and, hauling up to the eastward, she went on her way toward Holmes's Hole. The skipper was a relative of half of those who were interested in fitting out the rival *Sea Lion*, and had volunteered to obtain the very information he took with him, knowing how acceptable it would be to those at home. Sooth to say, a deep but wary excitement prevailed on the Vineyard, touching not only the sealing islands, but also in respect to the buried treasure. The information actually possessed by the relations of the deceased mariner was neither very full nor very clear. It consisted principally of sayings of Daggett, uttered during his homeward-bound passage, and transmitted by the master of the brig to him of the sloop in the course of conferences that wore away a long summer's afternoon, as the two vessels lay becalmed within a hundred fathoms of each other.

These sayings, however, had been frequent and intelligible. All men like to deal in that which makes them of importance; and the possession of his secrets had just the effect on Daggett's mind that was necessary to render him boastful. Under such impulses his tongue had not been very guarded; and facts leaked out which, when transmitted to his native island, through the medium of half-a-dozen tongues and as many fancies, amounted to statements sufficient to fire the imaginations of a people much duller than those of Martha's Vineyard. Accustomed to converse and think of such expeditions, it is not surprising that a few of the most enterprising of those who first heard the reports should unite and plan the adventure they now actually had in hand. When the intelligence of what was going on on Oyster Pond reached them, everything like hesitation or doubt disappeared; and from the moment of the nephew's return in quest of his uncle's assets, the equipment of the "Humses' Hull" craft had been pressed in a way that would have done credit to that of a government cruiser. Even Henry Eckford, so well-known for having undertaken to cut the trees and put upon the waters of Ontario two double-bank frigates, if frigates they could be termed, each of which was to mount its hundred guns, in the short space of sixty days, scarce manifested greater energy in carrying out his contract, than did these rustic islanders in preparing their craft to compete with that which they were now certain was about to sail from the place where their kinsman had breathed his last.

These keen and spirited islanders, however, did not work quite as much in the dark as our accounts, unexplained, might

give the reader reason to suppose. It will be remembered that there was a till to the chest which had not been examined by the deacon. This till contained an old mutilated journal, not of the last, but of one or two of the earlier voyages of the deceased; though it had detached entries that evidently referred to different and distant periods of time. By dint of study, and by putting together sundry entries that at first sight might not be supposed to have any connection with each other, the present possessor of that chest had obtained what he deemed to be very sufficient clews to his uncle's two great secrets. There were also in the chest several loose pieces of paper, on which there were rude attempts to make charts of all the islands and keys in question, giving their relative positions as it respected their immediate neighbors, but in no instance giving the latitudes and longitudes. In addition to these significant proofs that the reports brought through the two masters were not without a foundation, there was an unfinished letter, written by the deceased, and addressed as a sort of legacy, "to any, or all of Martha's Vineyard, of the name of Daggett." This address was sufficiently wide, including, probably, some hundreds of persons; a clan, in fact; but it was also sufficiently significant. The individual into whose hands it first fell, being of the name, read it first, as a matter of course, when he carefully folded it up, and placed it in a pocket-book, which he was much in the habit of carrying in his own pocket. On what principle this letter, unfinished and without a signature, with nothing indeed but its general and comprehensive address to point out its origin as well as its destination, was thus appropriated to the purposes of a single individual, we shall not stop to inquire. Such was the fact, however, and none connected with the equipment of the *Sea Lion*, of Holmes's Hole, knew anything of the existence of that document, its present possessor excepted. He looked it over occasionally, and deemed the information it conveyed of no trifling import, under all the circumstances of the case.

Both the enterprises of which we have given an opening account were perfectly characteristic of the state of society in which they were brought into existence. Deacon Pratt, if he had any regular calling, was properly a husbandman, though the love of money had induced him to invest his cash in nearly every concern around him, which promised remunerating returns. The principal owners of the *Sea Lion*, of Holmes's Hole, were husbandmen also; folks who literally tilled the earth, cradled their own oats and rye, and mowed their own meadows. Notwithstanding, neither of these men, those of the Vineyard any more than he of Oyster Pond, had hesitated about investing of his means in a maritime expedition, just as if they were all regular shipowners of the largest port in the Union. With such men, it is only necessary to exhibit an account with a fair prospect of large profits, and they are ever ready to enter into the adventure, heart, hand, and pocket. Last season, it may have been to look for whales on the coast of Japan; the season before that, to search for islands frequented by the seals; this season, probably, to carry a party out to hunt for camelopards, set nets for young lions, and beat up the quarters of the rhinoceros on the plains of Africa; while the next, they may be transporting ice from Long Pond to Calcutta and Kingston—not to say to London itself. Of such materials are those descendants of the Puritans composed; a mixture of good and evil; of the religion which clings to the past, in recollection rather than feeling, mingled with a worldly-mindedness that amounts nearly to rapacity; all cloaked and rendered decent by a conventional respect for duties, and respectable and useful, by frugality, enterprise, and untiring activity.

Roswell Gardiner had not mistaken the persons of those in the boat. They proved to be Phil Hazard, his first officer; Tim Green, the second mate; and the two sealers whom it had cost so much time and ingenuity to obtain. Although neither of the mates even suspected the truth, no sooner had they engaged the right sort of man

than he was tampered with by the agents of the Martha's Vineyard concern, and spirited away by means of more tempting proposals, before he had got quite so far as to sign the articles. One of the motives for sending Watson across to Oyster Pond had been to induce Captain Gardiner to believe he had engaged so skillful a hand, which would effectually prevent his attempting to procure another, until, at the last moment, he might find himself unable to put to sea for the want of a complement. A whaling or a sealing voyage requires that the vessel should take out with her the particular hands necessary to her specific object, though, of late years, the seamen have got so much in the habit of "running," especially in the Pacific, that it is only the craft that strictly belong to what may be termed the whaling communities, that bring back with them the people they carry out, and not always them.

But here had Roswell Gardiner his complement, and nearly everything ready to sea. He had only to go up to the Harbor and obtain his clearance, have a short interview with his owner, a longer with Mary, and be off for the antarctic circle, if indeed the ice would allow him to get so far south. There were now sixteen souls on board the *Sea Lion*, a very sufficient number for the voyage on which she was about to sail. The disposition or rating of the crew was as follows, viz.:

1. Roswell Gardiner, master.
2. Philip Hazard, chief mate.
3. Timothy Green, second "
4. David Weeks, carpenter.
5. Nathan Thompson, seaman.
6. Sylvester Havens, "
7. Marcus Todd, "
8. Hiram Flint, "
9. Joshua Short, "
10. Stephen Stimson, "
11. Bartlett Davidson, "
12. Peter Mount, landsman.
13. Arcularius Mott, "
14. Robert Smith, "
15. Cato Livingston, cook.
16. Primus Floyd, boy.

This was considered a good crew, on the whole. Every man was a native American, and most of them belonged to old Suffolk. Thompson, and Flint, and Short, and Stimson, four capital fellows in their way, came from the main; the last, it was said, from as far east as Kennebunk. No matter; they were all reasonably young, hale, active fellows, with a promise of excellent service about every man of them. Livingston and Floyd were colored persons, who bore the names of the two respectable families in which they or their progenitors had formerly been slaves. Weeks was accustomed to the sea, and might have been rated indifferently as a carpenter or as a mariner. Mount and Mott, though shipped as landsmen, were a good deal accustomed to the water also, having passed each two seasons in coasters, though neither had ever yet been really *outside*, or seen blue water.

It would not have been easy to give to the *Sea Lion* a more efficient crew; yet there was scarce a real seaman belonging to her—a man who could have been made a captain of the forecastle on board a frigate or a ship of the line. Even Gardiner, the best man in his little craft in nearly every respect, was deficient in many attainments that mark the thorough sea-dog. He would have been remarkable anywhere for personal activity, for courage, readiness, hardihood, and all those qualities which render a man useful in the business to which he properly belonged; but he could hardly be termed a skillful leadsman, knew little of the finesse of his calling, and was wanting in that in-and-in-breeding which converts habit into an instinct, and causes the thorough seaman to do the right thing, blow high or blow low, in the right way, and at the right moment. In all these respects, however, he was much the best man on board; and he was so superior to the rest as fully to command all their respect. Stimson was probably the next best seaman, after the master.

The day succeeding that on which the *Sea Lion* received the remainder of her people, Roswell Gardiner went up to the Harbor, where he met Deacon Pratt, by appointment. The object was to clear the schooner out, which could be done only at that place. Mary accompanied her uncle, to transact some of her own

little domestic business; and it was then arranged between the parties, that the deacon should make his last visit to his vessel in the return-boat of her master, while Roswell Gardiner should take Mary back to Oyster Pond, in the whale-boat that had brought her and her uncle over. As Baiting Joe, as usual, had acted as ferryman, it was necessary to get rid of him, the young sailor desiring to be alone with Mary. This was easily enough effected, by a present of a quarter of a dollar. The boat having two lug sails, and the wind being light and steady, at southwest, there was nothing to conflict with Roswell Gardiner's wishes.

The young sailor left the wharf at Sag Harbor about ten minutes after the deacon had preceded him, on his way to the schooner. As the wind was so light and so fair, he soon had his sheets in, and the boat gliding along at an easy rate, which permitted him to bestow nearly all his attention on his charming companion. Roswell Gardiner had sought this occasion, that he might once more open his heart to Mary, and urge his suit for the last time, previously to so long an absence. This he did in a manly, frank way, that was far from being unpleasant to his gentle listener, whose inclinations, for a few minutes, blinded her to the resolutions already made on principle. So urgent was her suitor, indeed, that she should solemnly plight her faith to him, ere he sailed, that a soft illusion came over the mind of one as affectionate as Mary, and she was half inclined to believe her previous determination was unjustifiable and obdurate. But the head of one of her high principles, and clear views of duty, could not long be deceived by her heart, and she regained the self-command which had hitherto sustained her in all her former trials, in connection with this subject.

"Perhaps it would have been better, Roswell," she said, "had I taken leave of you at the Harbor, and not incurred the risk of the pain that I foresee I shall both give and bear, in our present discourse. I have concealed nothing from you; possibly I have been more sincere than prudence would sanction. You know the only obstacle there is to our union; but that appears to increase in strength the more I ask you to reflect on it—to try to remove it."

"What would you have me do, Mary? Surely, not to play the hypocrite, and profess to believe that which I certainly do not, and which, after all my inquiries, I *cannot* believe."

"I am sorry it is so, on every account," returned Mary, in a low and saddened tone. "Sorry, that one of so frank, ingenuous a mind, should find it impossible to accept the creed of his fathers, and sorry that it must leave so impassable a chasm between us forever."

"No, Mary; that can never be! Nothing but death can separate us for so long a time! While we meet, we shall at least be friends; and friends love to meet and to see each other often."

"It may seem unkind, at a moment like this, Roswell, but it is in truth the very reverse, if I say we ought not to meet each other here, if we are bent on following our own separate ways toward a future world. My God is not your God; and what can there be of peace in a family, when its two heads worship different deities? I am afraid that you do not think sufficiently of the nature of these things."

"I did not believe you to be so illiberal, Mary! Had the deacon said as much, I might not have been surprised; but, for one like you to tell me that my God is not your God, is narrow indeed."

"Is it not so, Roswell? And, if so, why should we attempt to gloss over the truth by deceptive words? I am a believer in the Redeemer, as the Son of God; as one of the Holy Trinity; while you believe in him only as a man—a righteous and just, a sinless man, if you will, but as a man only. Now is not the difference in these creeds immense? Is it not, in truth, just the difference between God and man? I worship my Redeemer; regard him as the equal of the Father—as a part of the Divine Being; while you look on him as merely a man without sin—as a man such as Adam probably was before the fall."

"Do we know enough of these matters, Mary, to justify us in allowing them to interfere with our happiness?"

"We are told that they are all-essential to our happiness—not in the sense you may mean, Roswell, but in one of far higher import—and we cannot neglect them without paying the penalty."

"I think that you carry these notions too far, dearest Mary, and that it is possible for man and wife most heartily to love each other, and to be happy in each other, without their thinking exactly alike on religion. How many good and pious women do you see, who are contented and prosperous as wives and mothers, and who are members of meeting, but whose husbands make no profession of any sort!"

"That may be true, or not. I lay no claim to a right to judge of any other's duties, or manner of doing what they ought to do. Thousands of girls marry without *feeling* the very obligations that they profess to reverence; and when, in after life, deeper convictions come, they cannot cast aside the connections they have previously formed, if they would; and probably would not if they could. That is a different thing from a young woman, who has a deep sense of what she owes to her Redeemer, becoming deliberately, and with a full sense of what she is doing, the wife of one who regards her God as merely a man—I care not how you qualify this opinion, by saying a pure and sinless man; it will be man still. The difference between God and man is too immense to be frittered away by any such qualifications as that."

"But, if I find it *impossible* to believe all you believe, Mary, surely you would not punish me for having the sincerity to tell you the truth, and the whole truth."

"No, indeed, Roswell," answered the honest girl, gently, not to say tenderly. "Nothing has given me a better opinion of your principles, Roswell—a higher notion of what your upright and frank character really is, than the manly way in which you have admitted the justice of my suspicions of your want of faith—of faith, as I consider faith can alone exist. This fair dealing has made me honor you, and esteem you, in addition to the more girlish attachment that I do not wish to conceal from you, at least, I have so long felt."

"Blessed Mary!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner, almost ready to fall down on his knees and worship the pretty enthusiast who sat at his side, with a countenance in which intense interest in his welfare was beaming from two of the softest and sweetest blue eyes that maiden ever bent on a youth in modest tenderness, whatever disposition he might be in to accept her God as his God. "How can one so kind in all other respects, prove so cruel in this one particular!"

"Because that one particular, as you term it, Roswell, is all in all to her," answered the girl, with a face that was now flushed with feeling. "I must answer you as Joshua told the Israelites of old—'Choose you, this day, whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; *but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.*'"

"Do you class me with the idolators and pagans of Palestine?" demanded Gardiner, reproachfully.

"You have said it, Roswell. It is not I, but yourself, who have thus classed you. You worship your reason, instead of the only true and living God. This is idolatry of the worst character, since the idol is never seen by the devotee, and he does not know of its existence."

"You consider it then idolatry for one to use those gifts which he has received from his Maker, and to treat the most important of all subjects as a rational being, instead of receiving a creed blindly, and without thought?"

"If what you call thought could better the matter; if it were sufficient to comprehend and master this subject, there might be force in what you say. But what is this boasted reason after all? It is not sufficient to explain a single mystery of the creation, though there are thousands. I know there are, nay there *must*

be, a variety of opinions among those who look to their reasons, instead of accepting the doctrine of revelation, for the character of Christ; but I believe all who are not open infidels admit that the atonement of His death was sufficient for the salvation of men; now can you explain this part of the theory of our religion any more than you can explain the divine nature of the Redeemer? Can you *reason* any more wisely touching the fall than touching the redemption itself? I know I am unfit to treat of matters of this profound nature," continued Mary, modestly, though with great earnestness and beauty of manner; "but, to me, it seems very plain that the instant circumstances lead us beyond the limits of our means of comprehension, we are to *believe* in, and not to reason on, revelation. The whole history of Christianity teaches this. Its first ministers were uneducated men; men who were totally ignorant until enlightened by their faith; and all the lessons it teaches are to raise faith, and faith in the Redeemer, high above all other attainments, as the one great acquisition that includes and colors every other. When such is the fact, the heart does not make a stumbling-block of everything that the head cannot understand."

"I do not know how it is," answered Roswell Gardiner, influenced, though unconvinced; "but when I talk with you on the subject, Mary, I cannot do justice to my opinions, or to the manner in which I reason on them with my male friends and acquaintance. I confess it does appear to me illogical, unreasonable—I scarce know how to designate what I mean—but, improbable, that God should suffer himself, or his Son, to be crucified by beings that he himself created, or that he should feel a necessity for any such course, in order to redeem beings he had himself brought into existence."

"If there be any argument in the last, Roswell, it is an argument as much against the crucifixion of a man, as against the crucifixion of one of the Trinity itself. I understand you to believe that such a being as Jesus of Nazareth did exist; that he was crucified for our redemption; and that the atonement was accepted, and acceptable before God the Father. Now is it not just as difficult to understand how, or why, this should be, as to understand the common creed of Christians?"

"Surely there is a vast difference between the crucifixion of a subordinate being, and the crucifixion of one who made a part of the Godhead itself, Mary! I can imagine the first, though I may not pretend to understand its reasons, or why it was necessary it should be so; but I am certain you will not mistake my motive when I say I cannot imagine the other."

"Make no apologies to me, Roswell; look rather to that dread Being whose teachings, through chosen ministers, you disregard. As for what you say, I can fully feel its truth. I do not pretend to *understand* why such a sacrifice should be necessary, but I *believe* it, *feel* it; and believing and feeling it, I cannot but adore and worship the Son, who quitted heaven to come on earth, and suffered, that we might possess eternal life. It is all mystery to me, as is the creation itself, our existence, God himself, and all else that my mind is too limited to comprehend. But, Roswell, if I believe a part of the teachings of the Christian church, I must believe all. The apostles, who were called by Christ in person, who lived in his very presence, who knew nothing except as the Holy Spirit prompted, worshiped him as the Son of God, as one 'who thought it not robbery to be equal with God;' and shall I, ignorant and uninspired, pretend to set up my feeble means of reasoning, in opposition to their written instructions!"

"Yet must each of us stand or fall by the means he possesses, and the use he makes of them."

"That is quite true, Roswell; and ask yourself the use to which you put your own faculties. I do not deny that we are to exercise our reason, but it is within the bounds set for its exercise. We may examine the evidence of Christianity and determine for ourselves how far it is supported by reasonable and sufficient proofs, beyond this we cannot be expected to go, else might we be required to comprehend

the mystery of our own existence, which just as much exceeds our understanding as any other. We are told that man was created in the image of his Creator. which means that there is an immortal and spiritual part of him that is entirely different from the material creature. One perishes, temporarily at least—a limb can be severed from the body and perish, even while the body survives; but it is not so with that which has been created in the image of the Deity. That is imperishable, immortal, spiritual, though doomed to dwell awhile in a tenement of clay. Now why is it more difficult to believe that pure divinity may have entered into the person of one man, than to *believe*, nay to *feel*, that the image of God has entered into the persons of so many myriads of men? You not only overlook all this, Roswell, but you commit the, to me inexplicable, mistake of believing a part of a mystery, while you hesitate about believing all. Were you to deny the merits of the atonement altogether, your position would be much stronger than it is in believing what you do. But, Roswell, we will not embitter the moment of separation by talking more on this subject now. I have other things to say to you, and but little time to say them in. The promise you have asked of me to remain single until your return, I most freely make. It costs me nothing to give you *this* pledge, since there is scarce a possibility of my ever marrying another."

Mary repeated these words, or rather this idea in other words, to Roswell Gardiner's great delight; and again and again he declared that he could now penetrate the icy seas with a light heart, confident he should find her, on his return, disengaged, and, as he hoped, as much disposed to regard him with interest as she then was. Nevertheless, Gardiner did not deceive himself as to Mary's intentions. He knew her and her principles too well to fancy that her resolution would be very likely to falter. Notwithstanding their long and intimate knowledge of each other, at no time had she ever betrayed a weakness that promised to undermine her high sense of duty; and as time increased her means of judging of what those duties were, her submission to them seemed to be stronger and stronger. Had there been anything stern or repulsive in Mary's manner of manifesting the feeling that was uppermost in her mind, one of Roswell Gardiner's temperament would have been very apt to shake off her influence; but, so far from this being the case, she ever met him and parted from him with a gentle and ingenuous interest in his welfare, and occasionally with much womanly tenderness. He knew that she prayed for him daily, as fervently as she prayed for herself; and even this, he hoped, would serve to keep alive her interest in him during his absence. In this respect our young sailor showed no bad comprehension of human nature, nothing being more likely to maintain an influence of this sort than the conviction that on ourselves depends the happiness or interests of the person beloved.

CHAPTER VIII.

"And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward; from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear;
For I was, as it were, a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows, far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here."
—BYRON.

It was past the turn of the day when Roswell Gardiner reached his vessel, after having carefully and with manly interest in all that belonged to her, seen Mary to her home and taken his final leave of her. Of that parting we shall say but little. It was touching and warm-hearted, and it was rendered a little solemn by Mary Pratt's putting into her lover's hand a pocket Bible, with an earnest request that he would not forget to consult its pages. She added at the same time, that she had carefully marked those passages which she wished him most to study and reflect on. The book was accepted in the spirit in which it was offered, and carefully placed in a little case that contained about a hundred volumes of different works.

As the hour approached for lifting the anchor, the nervousness of the deacon became very apparent to the commander of his schooner. At each instant the former was at the latter's elbow, making some querulous suggestion, or asking a question that betrayed the agitated and unsettled state of his mind. It really seemed as if the old man at the last moment had not the heart to part with his property, or to trust it out of his sight. All this annoyed Roswell Gardiner, disposed as he was, at that instant, to regard every person and thing that in any manner pertained to Mary Pratt with indulgence and favor.

"You will be particular about them islands, Captain Gar'ner, and not get the schooner ashore," said the deacon, for the tenth time at least. "They tell me the tide runs like a horse in the high latitudes, and that seamen are often stranded by them, before they know where they are."

"Ay, ay, sir; I'll try and bear it in mind," answered Gardiner, vexed at being importuned so often to recollect that which there was so little likelihood of his forgetting. "I am an old cruiser in those seas, deacon, and know all about the tides. Well, Mr. Hazard, what is the news of the anchor?"

"We are short, sir, and only wait for orders to go on, and get clear of the ground."

"Trip at once, sir; and so farewell to America—or to this end of it, at least."

"Then the keys, they tell me, are dangerous navigation, Gar'ner, and a body needs have all his eyes about him."

"All places have their dangers to your sleepy navigator, deacon; but the man who keeps his eyes open has little to fear. Had you given us a chronometer, there would not have been one-half the risk there will be without one."

This had been a bone of contention between the master of the *Sea Lion* and its owner. Chronometers were not, by any means, in as general use at the period of our tale as they are to-day; and the deacon abhorred the expense to which such an article would have put him. Could he have got one at a fourth of the customary price he might have been tempted; but it formed no part of his principles of saving to anticipate and prevent waste by liberality.

No sooner was the schooner released from the ground than her sails were filled, and she went by the low spit of sand already mentioned, with the light southwest breeze still blowing in her favor, and an ebb tide. Everything appeared propitious, and no vessel probably ever left home under better omens. The deacon remained on board until Baiting Joe, who was to act as his boatman, reminded him of the distance and the probability that the breeze would go down entirely with the sun. As it was, they had to contend with wind and tide, and it would require all his own knowledge of the eddies to get the whale-boat up to Oyster Pond in anything like reasonable time. Thus admonished, the owner tore himself away from his beloved craft, giving "young Gar'ner" as many "last words" as if he were about to be executed. Roswell had a last word on his part, however, in the shape of a message to Mary.

"Tell Mary, deacon," said the young sailor, in an aside, "that I rely on her promise, and that I shall think of her, whether it be under the burning sun of the line, or among the ice of the antarctic."

"Yes, yes; that's as it should be," answered the deacon, heartily. "I like your perseverance, Gar'ner, and hope the gal will come round yet, and I shall have you for a nephew. There's nothing that takes the women's minds like money. Fill up the schooner with skins and ile, and bring back that treasure, and you make as sure of Mary for a wife as if the parson had said the benediction over you."

Such was Deacon Pratt's notion of his niece, as well as of the female sex. For months he regarded this speech as a *coup de maitre*, while Roswell Gardiner forgot it in half an hour; so much better than the uncle did the lover comprehend the character of the niece.

The *Sea Lion*, of Oyster Pond, had now cast off the last ligament which connected

her with the land. She had no pilot, none being necessary, or usual, in those waters; all that a vessel had to do being to give Long Island a sufficient berth in rounding its eastern extremity. The boat was soon shut in by Gardiner's Island, and thenceforth nothing remained but the ties of feeling to connect those bold adventurers with their native country. It is true that Connecticut, and subsequently Rhode Island, was yet visible on one hand, and a small portion of New York on the other; but as darkness came to close the scene, even that means of communication was soon virtually cut off. The light on Montauk, for hours, was the sole beacon for these bold mariners, who rounded it about midnight, fairly meeting the long, rolling swell of the broad Atlantic. Then the craft might be said to be at sea for the first time.

The *Sea Lion* was found to perform well. She had been constructed with an eye to comfort, as well as to sailing, and possessed that just proportion in her hull which carried her over the surface of the waves like a duck. This quality is of more importance to a small than to a large vessel, for the want of momentum renders what is termed "burying" a very deadening process to a light craft. In this very important particular Roswell was soon satisfied that the shipwright had done his duty.

As the wind still stood at southwest, the schooner was brought upon an easy bowline, as soon as she had Montauk light dead to windward. This new course carried her out to sea, steering south-southeast, a little easterly, under everything that would draw. The weather appearing settled, and there being no signs of a change, Gardiner now went below and turned in, leaving the care of the vessel to the proper officers of the watch, with an order to call him at sunrise. Fatigue soon asserted its power, and the young man was shortly in as profound a sleep as if he had not just left a mistress whom he almost worshiped for an absence of two years, and to go on a voyage that probably would expose him to more risks and suffering than any other enterprise then attempted by seafaring men. Our young sailor thought not of the last at all, but he fell asleep dreaming of Mary.

The master of the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond was called precisely at the hour he had named. Five minutes sufficed to bring him on deck, where he found everything as he had left it, with the exception of the schooner itself. In the six hours he had been below, his vessel had moved her position out to sea nearly forty miles. No land was now to be seen, the American coast being very tame and unpicturesque to the eye, as the purest patriot, if he happen to know anything of other parts of the world, must be constrained to admit. A low monotonous coast, that is scarcely visible at a distance of five leagues, is certainly not to be named in the same breath with those glorious shores of the Mediterranean, for instance, where Nature would seem to have exhausted herself in uniting the magnificent with the bewitching. On this continent, or on our own portion of it at least, we must be content with the useful, and lay no great claims to the beautiful; the rivers and bays giving us some compensation in their admirable commercial facilities, for the sameness, not to say tameness, of the views. We mention these things in passing, as a people that does not understand its relative position in the scale of nations, is a little apt to fall into errors that do not contribute to its character or respectability; more especially when they exhibit a self-love founded altogether on ignorance, and which has been liberally fed by flattery.

The first thing a seaman does on coming on deck, after a short absence, is to look to windward, in order to see how the wind stands, and what are the prospects of the weather. Then he turns his eyes aloft to ascertain what canvas is spread, and how it draws. Occasionally, the order of these observations is changed, the first look being sometimes bestowed on the sails, and the second on the clouds. Roswell Gardiner, however, cast his first glance this morning toward the southward and westward, and perceived that the breeze promised to be steady. On looking aloft, he was well satisfied with

the manner in which everything drew; then he turned to the second mate, who had the watch, whom he addressed cheerfully, and with a courtesy that is not always observed among sailors.

"A fine morning, sir," said Roswell Gardiner, "and a good-by to America. We've a long road to travel, Mr. Green, but we've a fast boat to do it in. Here is an offing ready-made to our hands. Nothing in sight to the westward; not so much as a coaster even! It's too early for the outward-bound craft of the last ebb, and too late for those that sailed the tide before. I never saw this bight of the coast clearer of canvas."

"Ay, ay, sir; it does seem empty, like. Here's a chap, however, to leeward, who appears inclined to try his rate of sailing with us. Here he is, sir, a very little abaft the beam; and, as near as I can make him out, he's a foretawsail schooner, of about our own dimensions; if you'll just look at him through this glass, Captain Gar'ner, you'll see he has not only our rig, but our canvas set."

"You are right enough, Mr. Green," returned Roswell, after getting his look. "He is a schooner of about our tonnage, and under precisely our canvas. How long has the fellow bore as he does now?"

"He came out from under Block Island a few hours since, and we made him by moonlight. The question with me is, where did that chap come from? A Stunnin'tun man would have naturally passed to windward of Block Island; and a Newport or Providence fellow would not have fetched so far to windward without making a stretch or two on purpose. That schooner has bothered me ever since it was daylight; for I can't place him where he is by any traverse my poor l'arnin' can work!"

"She does seem to be out of her way. Possibly it is a schooner beating up for the Hook, and finding herself too close in, she is standing to the southward to get an offing again."

"Not she, sir. She came out from behind Block, and a craft of her size that wanted to go to the westward, and which found itself so close in, would have taken the first of the flood and gone through the Race like a shot. No, no, Captain Gar'ner; this fellow is bound south as well as ourselves, and it is quite onaccountable how he should be just where he is—so far to windward, or so far to leeward, as a body might say. A south-southeast course, from any place behind Point Judith, would have taken him off near No Man's Land, and here he is almost in a line with Block Island!"

"Perhaps he is out of New London, or some of the ports on the main, and being bound to the West Indies he has been a little careless about weathering the island. It's no great matter, after all."

"It is some such matter, Captain Gar'ner, as walkin' round a meetin'-us' when your ar'n'd is at the door in front. But there was no such craft in at Stunnin'tun or New London, as I know from havin' been at both places within the last eight-and-forty hours."

"You begin to make me as curious about this fellow as you seem to be yourself, sir. And now I think the matter all over, it is somewhat ext'or'nary he should be just where he is. It is, however, a very easy thing to get a nearer look at him, and it's no great matter to us, intending as we do to make the islands off the Cape de Verde, if we do lose a little of our weatherly position—keep the schooner away a point, and get a small pull on your weather braces—give her a little sheet too, fore and aft, sir. So, that will do—keep her steady at that—southeast and by south. In two hours we shall just about speak this out-of-the-way joker."

As every command was obeyed, the *Sea Lion* was soon running off free, her bowlines hanging loose, and all her canvas a rap full. The change in her line of sailing brought the sail to leeward, a little forward of her beam; but the movement of the vessel that made the freest wind was consequently the most rapid. In the course of half an hour the stranger was again a little abaft the beam, and he was materially nearer than when first seen. No change was made in the route

of the stranger, who now seemed disposed to stand out to sea, with the wind, as it was, on an easy bowline, without paying any attention to the sail in sight.

It was noon ere the two schooners came within hail of each other. Of course, as they drew nearer and nearer, it was possible for those on board of each to note the appearance, equipments, and other peculiarities of his neighbor. In size, there was no apparent difference between the vessels, and there was a somewhat remarkable resemblance in the details.

"That fellow is no West India drogger," said Roswell Gardiner, when less than a mile from the stranger. "He carries a boat on deck, as we do, and has one on each quarter, too. Can it be possible that he is bound after seals, as well as we are ourselves!"

"I believe you're right, sir," answered Hazard, the chief mate, who was now on deck. "There's a sealing look about the gentleman, if I know my own complexion. It's odd enough, Captain Gar'ner, that two of us should come together, out here in the offing, and both of us bound to the other end of the 'arth!"

"There is nothing so very remarkable in *that*, Mr. Hazard, when we remember that the start must be properly timed for those who wish to be off Cape Horn in the summer season. We shall neither of us get there much before December, and I suppose the master of yon schooner knows that as well as I do myself. The position of this craft puzzles me far more than anything else about her. From what port can a vessel come, that she should be just here, with the wind at southwest?"

"Ay, sir," put in Green, who was moving about the decks, coiling ropes and clearing things away, "that's what I tell the chief mate. Where can a craft come from, to be just here, with this wind, if she don't come from Stunnin'tun. Even from Stunnin'tun she'd be out of her way; but no such vessel has been in that port any time these six weeks. Here, you Stimson, come this way a bit. Didn't you tell me something of having seen a schooner at New Bedford, that was about our build and burden, and that you understood had been bought for a sealer?"

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Stimson, as bluff an old sea-dog as ever flattened in a jib-sheet, "and that's the craft, as I'm a thinkin', Mr. Green. She had an animal for a figurehead, and that craft has an animal, as well as I can judge at this distance."

"You are right enough there, Stephen," cried Roswell Gardiner, "and that animal is a seal. It's the twin-brother of the sea lion we carry under our own bowsprit. There's some proof in that, tastes agree sometimes, even if they do differ generally. What became of the schooner you saw?"

"I heard, sir, that she was bought up by some Vineyard men, and was taken across to Hum'ses Hull. They sometimes fit out a craft there, as well as on the main. I should have crossed myself to see what they was at, but I fell in with Mr. Green, and shipped aboard here."

"An adventure by which, I hope, you will not be a loser, my hearty," put in the captain. "And you think that is the craft which was built at New Bedford, and fitted out on the Vineyard?"

"Sartain of it, sir; for I know the figure-head, and all about her build."

"Hand me the trumpet, Mr. Green; we shall soon be near enough for a hail, and it will be easy to learn the truth."

Roswell Gardiner waited a few minutes for the two schooners to close, and was in the very act of applying the trumpet to his mouth when the usual salutation was sent across the water from the stranger. During the conversation that now took place, the vessels gradually drew nearer to each other, until both parties laid aside their trumpets, and carried on the discourse with the unaided voice.

"Schooner, ahoy!" was the greeting of the stranger, and a simple "Hilloa!" the answer.

"What schooner is that, pray?"

"The *Sea Lion*, of Oyster Pond, Long Island; bound to the southward, after seal, as I suppose you know by our outfit."

"When did you leave Oyster Pond—

and how did you leave your owner, the good Deacon Pratt?"

"We sailed yesterday afternoon, on the first of the ebb, and the deacon left us as we weighed anchor. He was well, and full of hope for our luck. What schooner is that, pray?"

"The *Sea Lion*, of Hum'ses Hull; bound to the southward, after seals, as you probably knew by *our* outfit. Who commands that schooner?"

"Captain Roswell Gar'ner; who commands aboard you, pray?"

"Captain Jason Daggett," showing himself more plainly, by moving out of the line of the main-rigging. "I had the pleasure of seeing you when I was on the P'int, looking after my uncle's dunnage, you may remember, Captain Gar'ner. 'Twas but the other day, and you are not likely to have forgotten my visit."

"Not at all, not at all, Captain Daggett; though I had no idea *then* that you intended making a voyage to the southward so soon. When did you leave the Hole, sir?"

"Day before yesterday, a'ternoon. We came out of the Hull about five o'clock."

"How had you the wind, sir?"

"Sou'west, and sou'west and by south. There has been but little change in that these three days."

Roswell Gardiner muttered something to himself; but he did not deem it prudent to utter the thoughts that were just then passing through his mind aloud.

"Ay, ay," he answered, after a moment's pause, "the wind has stood there the whole week; but I think we shall shortly get a change. There is an easterly feeling in the air."

"Waal, let it come. With this offing, we could clear Hatteras with anything that wasn't worse than a southeaster. There's a southerly set in here down the coast for two or three hundred miles."

"A heavy southeaster would jam us in here between the shoals in a way I shouldn't greatly relish, sir. I like always to get to the eastward of the Stream, as soon as I can, in running off the land."

"Very true, Captain Gar'ner—very true, sir. It *is* best to get outside the Stream, if a body *can*. Once there, I call a craft at sea. Eight-and-forty hours more of this wind would just about carry us there. Waal, sir, as we're bound on the same sort of v'g'ge, I'm happy to have fallen in with you; and I see no reason why we should not be neighborly, and 'gam' it a little, when we've nothing better to do. I liked that schooner of yours so well that I've made my own to look as nearly resembling her as I could. You see our paint is exactly the same."

"I have observed that, Captain Daggett; and you might say the same of the figureheads."

"Ay, ay; when I was over on the P'int, they told me the name of the carver in Boston who cut your seal, and I sent to him to cut me a twin. If they lay in a shipyard, side by side, I don't think you could tell one from the other."

"So it seems, sir. Pray, haven't you a man aboard there of the name of Watson?"

"Ay, ay—he's my second mate. I know what you mean, Captain Gar'ner—you're right enough, 'tis the same hand who was aboard you; but wanting a second officer, I offered him the berth, and he thought that better than taking a foremast lay in your craft."

This explanation probably satisfied all who heard it, though the truth was not more than half told. In point of fact, Watson was engaged as Daggett's second mate *before* he ever laid eyes on Roswell Gardiner, and had been sent to watch the progress of the work on Oyster Pond, as has been previously stated. It was so much in the natural order of events for a man to accept preferment when offered, however, that even Gardiner himself blamed the delinquent for the desertion far less than he had previously done. In the meantime, the conversation proceeded.

"You told us nothing of your having that schooner fitting when you were on the Point," observed Roswell Gardiner, whose thoughts just then happened to advert to this particular fact.

"My mind was pretty much taken up with the affairs of my poor uncle, I sup-

pose, Captain Gar'ner. Death must visit each of us once; nevertheless, it makes us all melancholy when he comes among friends."

Now Roswell Gardiner was not in the least sentimental, nor had he the smallest turn toward indulging in moral inferences from ordinary events; but this answer seemed so proper that it found no objection in his mind. Still, the young man had his suspicions on the subject of the equipment of the other schooner, and suspicions that were now active and keen, and which led him directly to fancy that Daggett had also some clew to the very objects he was after himself. Singular as it may seem at first, Deacon Pratt's interests were favorably affected by this unexpected meeting with the *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole. From the first, Roswell Gardiner had been indisposed to give full credit to the statements of the deceased mariner, ascribing no small part of his account to artifice, stimulated by a desire to render himself important. But, now that he found one of this man's family embarked in an enterprise similar to his own, his views of its expediency were sensibly changed. Perfectly familiar with the wary economy with which every interest was regulated in that part of the world, he did not believe a company of Martha's Vineyard men would risk their money in an enterprise that they had not good reasons for believing would succeed.

Although it exceeded his means to appreciate fully the information possessed by the Vineyard folks, and covetousness did not quicken his faculties on this subject, as they had quickened those of the deacon, he could see enough to satisfy his mind that either the sealing-islands, or the booty of the pirates, or both, had a reality, in the judgment of others, which had induced them also to risk their money in turning their knowledge to account. The effect of this conviction was very natural. It induced Roswell to regard the charts, and his instructions, and all connected with his voyage, as much more serious matters than he had originally been inclined to do. Until now, he had thought it well enough to let the deacon have his fancies, relying on his own ability to obtain a cargo for the schooner, by visiting sealing stations where he had been before; but now he determined to steer at once for Daggett's Islands, as he and his owner named the land revealed to them, and ascertain what could be done there. He thought it probable the other *Sea Lion* might wish to keep him company; but the distance was so great that a hundred occasions must occur when it would be in his power to shake off such a consort, should he deem it necessary.

For several hours the two schooners stood on in company, keeping just without hailing distance apart, and sailing so nearly alike as to render it hard to say which craft had the best of it. There was nothing remarkable in the fact that two vessels, built for the same trade, should have a close general resemblance to each other; but it was not common to find them so molded, sparred, and handled, that their rate of sailing should be nearly identical. If there was any difference, it was slightly in favor of the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard, which rather drew ahead of her consort, if consort the other *Sea Lion* could be termed, in the course of the afternoon.

It is scarcely necessary to say that many were the speculations that were made on board these rival vessels—competitors now for the commonest glories of their pursuits, as well as in the ultimate objects of their respective voyages. On the part of Roswell Gardiner and his two mates, they did not fail, in particular, to comment on the singularity of the circumstance that the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard should be so far out of her direct line of sailing.

"Although we have had the wind at sow-west" (*sow*-west always, as pronounced by every seaman, from the Lord High Admiral of England, when there happens to be such a functionary, down to the greenest hand on board the greenest sealer) "for these last few days," said Hazard, "anybody can see we shall soon have easterly weather. There's an easterly feel in the air, and all last night the water had an easterly glimmer about it.

Now why a man who came out of the Vineyard Sound, and who had nothing to do but just to clear the west end of his own island, and then lay his course off yonder to the southward, and eastward, should bear up cluss (Anglicé, close) under Block, and stretch out to sea, for all the world as if he was a Stunnin'tun chap, or a New Lunnoner, that had fallen a little to leeward, is more than I can understand, Captain Gar'ner! Depend on it, sir, there's a reason for't. Men don't put schooners into the water, nowadays, and give them costly outfits, with three whale-boats, and sealin' gear in abundance, just for the fun of making fancy traverses on or off a coast, like your yacht gentry, who never know what they would be at, and who never make a v'y'ge worth speaking on."

"I have been turning all this over in my mind, Mr. Hazard," answered the young master, who was amusing himself at the moment with strapping a small block, while he threw many a glance at the vessel that was just as close under his lee as comported with her sailing. "There is a reason for it, as you say; but I can find no other than the fact that she has come so much out of her way, in order to fall in with *us;* knowing that we were to come around Montauk at a particular time."

"Well, sir, that may have been her play! Men bound the same way often wish to fall into good company, to make the journey seem the shorter, by making it so much the pleasanter."

"Those fellows can never suppose the two schooners will keep in sight of each other from forty-one degrees north all the way to seventy south, or perhaps further south still! If we remain near each other a week, 'twill be quite out of the common way."

"I don't know that, sir. I was once in a sealer that, do all she could, couldn't get shut of a curious neighbor. When seals are scarce, and the master don't know where to look for 'em, he is usually glad to drop into some vessel's wake, if it be only to pick up her leavin's."

"Outfits are not made on such chances as that. These Vineyard people know where they are going as well as we know ourselves; perhaps better."

"There is great confidence aboard here, in the master, Captain Gar'ner. I overheard the watch talking the matter over early this morning; and there was but one opinion among *them*, I can tell you, sir."

"Which opinion was, Mr. Hazard——"

"That a lay aboard this craft would be worth a lay and a half aboard any other schooner out of all America! Sailors go partly on skill and partly on luck. I've known hands that wouldn't ship with the best masters that ever sailed a vessel, if they didn't think they were lucky as well as skillful."

"Ay, ay, it's all *luck!* Little do these fellows think of *Providence*—or of *deserving*, or *undeserving*. Well, I hope the schooner will not disappoint them—or her master, either. But, whaling and sealing, and trusting to the chances of the ocean, and our most flattering hopes, may mislead us after all."

"Ay, ay, sir; nevertheless, Captain Gar'ner *has* a name, and men will trust to it!"

Our young master could not but be flattered at this, which came at a favorable moment to sustain the resolutions awakened by the competition with the rival schooner. Although so obviously competitors, and that in a matter of trade, the interest which above all others is apt to make men narrow-minded and hostile to each other, though the axiom would throw this particular reproach on *doctors*, there were no visible signs that the two vessels did not maintain the most amicable relations. As the day advanced the wind fell, and after many passages of nautical compliments, by means of signals and the trumpet, Roswell Gardiner fairly lowered a boat into the water, and went a "gamming," as it is termed, on board the other schooner.

Each of these little vessels was well provided with boats, and those of the description in common use among whalers. A whale-boat differs from the ordinary jolly-boat, launch, or yawl—gigs, barges, din-

guis, etc., etc., being exclusively for the service of vessels of war—in the following particulars, viz:—It is sharp at both ends in order that it may "back off" as well as "pull on;" it steers with an oar instead of with a rudder, in order that the bows may be thrown round to avoid danger when not in motion; it is buoyant, and made to withstand the shock of waves at both ends; and it is light and shallow, though strong, that it may be pulled with facility. When it is remembered that one of these little egg-shells—little as vessels, though of good size as boats—is often dragged through troubled waters at the rate of ten or twelve knots, and frequently at even a swifter movement, one can easily understand how much depends on its form, buoyancy and strength. Among seamen it is commonly thought that a whale-boat is the safest craft of the sort in which men can trust themselves in rough water.

Captain Daggett received his guest with marked civility, though in a quiet, eastern way. The rum and water were produced and a friendly glass was taken by one after the other. The two masters drank to each other's success, and many a conventional remark was made between them on the subject of sea-lions, sea-elephants, and the modes of capturing such animals. Even Watson, semi-deserter as he was, was shaken cordially by the hand, and his questionable conduct overlooked. The ocean has many of the aspects of eternity, and often disposes mariners to regard their fellow-creatures with an expansiveness of feeling suited to their common situations. Its vastness reminds them of the time that has neither beginning nor end; its ceaseless movement, of the never-tiring impulses of human passions; and its accidents and dangers, of the Providence which protects all alike, and which alone prevents our being abandoned to the dominion of chance.

Roswell Gardiner was a kind-hearted man, moreover, and was inclined to judge his fellows leniently. Thus it was that his "good evening" at parting to Watson was just as frank and sincere as that he bestowed on Captain Daggett himself.

CHAPTER IX.

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deeds, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown."
—BYRON.

THAT evening the sun set in clouds, though the eastern horizon was comparatively clear. There was, however, an unnatural outline to objects, by which their dimensions were increased, and in some degree rendered indefinite. We do not know the reason why the wind at east should produce these phenomena, nor do we remember ever to have met with any attempt at a solution; but of the fact we are certain, by years of observation. In what is called "easterly weather," objects are seen through the medium of a refraction that is entirely unknown in a clear northwester; the crests of the seas emit a luminous light that is far more apparent than at other times; and the face of the ocean, at midnight, often wears the aspect of a cloudy day. The nerves, too, answer to this power of the eastern winds. We have a barometer within that can tell when the wind is east without looking abroad, and one that never errs. It is true that allusions are often made to these peculiarities, but where are we to look for the explanation? On the coast of America the sea breeze comes from the rising sun, while on that of Europe it blows from the land; but no difference in these signs of its influence could we ever discover on account of this marked distinction.

Roswell Gardiner found the scene greatly changed when he came on deck next morning. The storm, which had been brewing so long, had come at last, and the wind was blowing a little gale from the southeast. The quarter from which the air came had compelled the officer of the watch to haul up on the larboard tack,

or with the schooner's head to the southward and westward; a course that might do for a few days, provided it did not blow too heavily. The other tack would not have cleared the shoals, which stretched away to a considerable distance to the eastward. Hazard had got in his flying-jib, and had taken the bonnets off his fore sail and jib, to prevent the craft burying. He had also single-reefed his mainsail and fore-topsail. The *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard imitated each movement, and was brought down precisely to the same canvas as her consort, and on the same tack. At that moment the two vessels were not a cable's length asunder, the Oyster Ponders being slightly to leeward. Their schooner, however, had a trifling advantage in sailing when it blew fresh and the water was rough; which advantage was now making itself apparent, as the two craft struggled ahead through the troubled element.

"I wish we were two hundred miles to the eastward," observed the young master to his first officer, as soon as his eye had taken in the whole view. "I am afraid we shall get jammed in on Cape Hatteras. That place is always in the way with the wind at southeast and a vessel going to the southward. We are likely to have a dirty time of it, Mr. Hazard."

"Ay, ay, sir, dirty enough," was the careless answer. "I've known them that would go back and anchor in Fort Pond Bay, or even in Gardiner's, until this southeaster has blown itself out."

"I couldn't think of that! We are a hundred miles southeast of Montauk, and if I run the craft into any place, it shall be into Charleston, or some of the islands along that coast. Besides, we can always ware off the land, and place ourselves a day's run further to the southward, and we can then give the shoals a wide berth on the other tack. If we were in the bight of the coast between Long Island and Jersey, 'twould be another matter; but, out here, where we are, I should be ashamed to look the deacon in the face, if I didn't hold on."

"I only made the remark, Captain Gar'ner, by way of saying something. As for getting to the southward, close in with our own coast, I don't know that it will be of much use to a craft that wishes to stand so far to the eastward, since the trades must be met well to windward, or they had better not be met at all. For my part, I would as soon take my chance of making a passage to the Cape de Verds or their neighborhood, by lifting my anchor from Gardiner's Bay, three days hence, as by meeting the next shift of wind down south, off Charleston or Tybee."

"We should only be five hundred miles to windward, in the latter case, did the wind come from the southwest again, as at this season of the year it is very likely to do. But it is of no consequence; men bound where we have to go, ought not to run into port every time the wind comes out foul. You know as well as I do, Mr. Hazard, that away down south, yonder, a fellow thinks a gale of wind is a relief, provided it brings clear water with it. I would rather run a week among islands, than a single day among icebergs. One knows where to find land, for that never moves; but your mountains that float about, are here to-day, and there to-morrow."

"Quite true, sir," returned Hazard; "and men that take their lays in sealers, are not to expect anything but squalls. I'm ready to hold on as long as our neighbor yonder: he seems to be trimming down to it, as if in raal earnest to get ahead."

This was true enough. The *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard was doing her best, all this time; and though unable to keep her station on her consort's weather bow, where she had been most of the morning, she was dropped so very slowly as to render the change nearly imperceptible. Now it was, that the officers and crews of these two crafts watched their "behavior," as it is technically termed, with the closest vigilance and deepest interest. Those in the Oyster Pond vessel regarded the movements of their consort, much as a belle in a ball-room observes the effect produced by the sister belles around her; or a rival

physician notes the progress of an operation that is to add new laurels, or to cause old ones to wither. Now, the lurch was commented on; then, the pitch was thought to be too heavy; and Green was soon of opinion that their competitor was not as easy on her spars as their own schooner. In short, every comparison that experience, jealousy, or skill could suggest, was freely made; and somewhat as a matter of course, in favor of their own vessel. That which was done on board the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, was very freely emulated by those on board her namesake of the Vineyard. They made *their* comparisons, and formed *their* conclusions, with the same deference to self-esteem, and the same submission to hope, as had been apparent among their competitors. It would seem to be a law of nature that men should thus flatter themselves, and perceive the mote in the eye of their neighbor, while the beam in their own escapes.

Had there been an impartial judge present, he might have differed from both sets of critics. Such a person would have seen that one of these schooners excelled in this quality, while the other had an equal advantage in another. In this way, by running through the list of properties that are desirable in a ship, he would, most probably, have come to the conclusion that there was not much to choose between the two vessels; but that each had been constructed with an intelligent regard to the particular service in which she was about to be employed, and both were handled by men who knew perfectly well how to take care of craft of that description.

The wind gradually increased in strength, and sail was shortened in the schooners, until each was finally brought down to a close-reefed foresail. This would have been heaving the vessels to, had they not been kept a little off, in order to force them through the water. To lie-to, in perfection, some after-sail might have been required; but neither master saw a necessity, as yet, of remaining stationary. It was thought better to wade along some two knots, than to be pitching and lurching with nothing but a drift, or leeward set. In this, both masters were probably right, and found their vessels farther to windward in the end, than if they had endeavored to hold their own, by lying-to. The great difficulty they had to contend with, in keeping a little off, was the danger of seas coming on board; but, as yet, the ocean was not sufficiently aroused to make this very hazardous, and both schooners, having no real cargoes, were light and buoyant, and floated dry. Had they encountered the sea there was, with full freights in their holds, it might have been imprudent to expose them even to this remote chance of having their decks swept. Water comes aboard of small vessels almost without an exception, in head winds and seas; though the contrivances of modern naval architecture have provided defences that make merchant vessels, now, infinitely more comfortable, in this respect, than they were at the period of which we are writing.

At the end of three days, Roswell Gardiner supposed himself to be about the latitude of Cape Henry, and some thirty or forty leagues from the land. It was much easier to compute the last, than the first of these material facts. Of course, he had no observations. The sun had not been visible since the storm commenced, and nearly half the time, during the last day, the two vessels were shut in from one another, by mists and a small rain. It blew more in squalls than it had done, and the relative positions of the schooners were more or less affected by the circumstance. Sometimes, one would be to windward, and ahead; then, the other would obtain a similar advantage. Once or twice they seemed about to separate, the distance between them getting to be so considerable, as apparently to render it impossible to keep in company; then the craft would change places, by a slow process, passing quite near to each other again. No one could tell, at the moment, precisely why these variations occurred; though the reasons, generally, were well understood by all on board them. Squalls, careless steering, currents, eddies, and all

the accidents of the ocean, contribute to create these vacillating movements, which will often cause two vessels of equal speed, and under the same canvas, to seem to be of very different qualities. In the nights, the changes were greatest, often placing the schooners leagues asunder, and seemingly separating them altogether. But Roswell Gardiner became satisfied that Captain Daggett stuck by him intentionally; for on all such occasions if *his* schooner happened to be out of the way, he managed to close again, ere the danger of separating became too great to be overcome.

Our mariners judged of their distance from the land by means of the lead. If the American coast is wanting in the sublime and picturesque, and every traveler must admit its defects in both, it has the essential advantage of graduated soundings. So regular is the shoaling of the water, and so studiously have the fathoms been laid down, that a cautious navigator can always feel his way in to the coast, and never need place his vessel on the beach, as is so often done, without at least knowing that he was about to do so. Men become adventurous by often-repeated success; and the struggles of competition, the go-ahead-ism of the national character, and the trouble it gives to sound in deep water, all contribute to cast away the reckless and dashing navigator, on this as well as on other coasts, and this to his own great surprise; but, whenever such a thing *does* happen, unless in cases of stress of weather, the reader may rest assured it is because those who have had charge of the stranded vessel have neglected to sound. The mile-stones on a highway do not more accurately note the distances, than does the lead on nearly the whole of the American coast. Thus Roswell Gardiner judged himself to be about thirty-two or three marine leagues from the land, on the evening of the third day of that gale of wind. He placed the schooner in the latitude of Cape Henry on less certain data, though that was the latitude in which he supposed her to be, by dead reckoning.

"I wish I knew where Daggett makes himself out," said the young master, just as the day closed on a most stormy and dirty-looking night. "I don't half like the appearance of the weather; but I do not wish to ware off the land, with that fellow ahead and nearer to the danger, if there be any, than we are ourselves."

Here Roswell Gardiner manifested a weakness that lies at the bottom of half our blunders. He did not like to be outdone by a competitor, even in his mistakes. If the *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole could hold on, on that tack, why might not the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond do the same? It is by this process of human vanity that men sustain each other in wrong, and folly obtains the sanction of numbers, if not that of reason. In this practice we see one of the causes of the masses becoming misled, and this seldom happens without their becoming oppressive.

Roswell Gardiner, however, did not neglect the lead. The schooner had merely to luff close to the wind, and they were in a proper state to sound. This they did twice during that night, and with a very sensible diminution in the depth of the water. It was evident that the schooner was getting pretty close in on the coast, the wind coming out nearly at south, in squalls. Her commander held on, for he thought there were indications of a change, and he still did not like to ware so long as his rival of the Vineyard kept on the larboard tack. In this way, each encouraging the other in recklessness, did these two craft run nearly into the lion's jaw, as it might be; for, when the day reappeared, the wind veered round to the eastward, a little northerly, bringing the craft directly on a lee-shore, blowing at the time so heavily as to render a foresail reefed down to a mere rag more canvas than the little vessels could well bear.

As the day returned, and the drizzle cleared off a little, land was seen to leeward, stretching slightly to seaward, both ahead and astern! On consulting his charts, and after getting a pretty good look at the coast from aloft, Roswell Gardiner became satisfied that he was off Currituck, which placed him near six degrees to the southward of his port of

departure, and about four to the westward. Our young man now deeply felt that a foolish rivalry had led him into an error, and he regretted that he had not wore the previous evening, when he might have had an offing that would have enabled him to stand in either direction, clearing the land. As things were, he was not by any means certain of the course he ought to pursue.

Little did Gardiner imagine that the reason why Daggett had thus stood on, was solely the wish to keep him company; for that person, in consequence of Gardiner's running so close in toward the coast, had taken up the notion that the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond meant to pass through the West Indies, visiting the key which was thought to contain treasure, and of which he had some accounts that had aroused all his thirst for gold, without giving him the clew necessary to obtain it. Thus it was that a mistaken watchfulness on one side, and a mistaken pride on the other, had brought these two vessels into as dangerous a position as could have been obtained for them by a direct attempt to place them in extreme jeopardy.

About ten, the gale was at its height, the wind still hanging at east, a little northerly. In the course of the morning, the officers on board both schooners, profiting by lulls and clear moments, had got so many views of the land from aloft, as to be fully aware of their respective situations. All thoughts of competition and watchfulness had now vanished. Each vessel was managed with a reference solely to her safety; and, as might have been foreseen when true seamen handled both, they had recourse to the same expedients to save themselves. The mainsails of both crafts were set balance-reefed, and the hulls were pressed up against the wind and sea, while they were driven ahead with increased momentum.

"That mainmast springs like a whalebone whip-handle, sir," said Hazard, when this new experiment had been tried some ten minutes or more. "She jumps from one sea to another, like a frog in a hurry to hop into a puddle!"

"She must stand it, or go ashore," answered Gardiner, coolly, though in secret he was deeply concerned. "Did Deacon Pratt forgive me, should we lose the schooner, I never could forgive myself!"

"Should we lose the schooner, Captain Gar'ner, few of us would escape drowning, to feel remorse or joy. Look at that coast, sir—it is clear now, and a body can see a good bit of it—never did I put eyes upon a less promising landfall for strangers to make."

Roswell Gardiner did look as desired, and he fully agreed with Hazard in opinion. Ahead and astern the land trended to seaward, placing the schooners in a curve of the coast, or what seamen term a bight, rendering it quite impossible for the vessels to lay out past either of the headlands in sight. The whole coast was low, and endless lines of breakers were visible along it, flashing up with luminous crests that left no doubt of their character, or of the dangers that they so plainly denoted. At times, columns of water shot up into the air like enormous jets, and the spray was carried inland for miles. Then it was that gloom gathered around the brows of the seamen, who fully comprehended the nature of the danger that was so plainly indicated. The green hands were the least concerned, "knowing nothing and fearing nothing," as the older seamen are apt to express their sense of this indifference on the part of the boys and landsmen.

According to the calculations of those on board the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, they had about two miles of drift before they should be in the breakers. They were on the best tack, to all appearances, and that was the old one, or the same leg that had carried them into the bight. To ware now, indeed, would be a very hazardous step, since every inch of room was of importance. Gardiner's secret hope was that they might find the inlet that led into Currituck, which was then open, though we believe it has since been closed, in whole or in part, by the sands. This often happens on the American coast, very tolerable passages existing this year for vessels of an easy draught, that shall

be absolutely shut up, and be converted into visible beach, a few years later. The waters within will then gain head, and break out, cutting themselves a channel that remains open until a succession of gales drives in the sands upon them from the outside once more.

Gardiner well knew he was on the most dangerous part of the whole American coast, in one sense at least. The capacious sounds that spread themselves within the long beaches of sand were almost as difficult of navigation as any shoals to the northward; yet would he gladly have been in one, in preference to clawing off breakers on their outside. As between the two schooners, the Vineyard men had rather the best of it, being near a cable's length to windward, and so much farther removed from destruction. The difference, however, was of no great account in the event of the gale continuing, escape being utterly impossible for either in that case. So critical was the situation of both craft becoming, indeed, that neither could now afford to yield a single fathom of the ground she held.

All eyes were soon looking for the inlet, it having been determined to keep the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond away for it, should it appear to leeward, under circumstances that would allow of her reaching it. The line of breakers was now very distinctly visible, and each minute did it not only appear to be, but it was in fact nearer and nearer. Anchors were cleared away, and ranges of cable overhauled, anchoring being an expedient that a seaman felt bound to resort to, previously to going ashore, though it would be with very little hope of ground-tackles holding.

The schooner had been described by Hazard as "jumping" into the sea. This expression is not a bad one, as applied to small vessels in short seas, and it was particularly apt on this occasion. Although constructed with great care forward as to buoyancy, this vessel made plunges into the waves she met that nearly buried her; and, once or twice, the shocks were so great, that those on board her could with difficulty persuade themselves they had not struck the bottom. The lead, nevertheless, still gave water sufficient, though it was shoaling fast, and with a most ominous regularity. Such was the actual state of things when the schooner made one of her mad plunges, and was met by a force that seemed to check her forward movement as effectually as if she had hit a rock. The mainmast was a good spar in some respects, but it wanted wood. An inch or two more in diameter might have saved it; but the deacon had been induced to buy it to save his money, though remonstrated with at the time. This spar now snapped in two, a few feet from the deck, and falling to leeward, it dragged after it the head of the foremast, leaving the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond actually in a worse situation, just at that moment, than if she had no spars at all.

Roswell Gardiner now appeared in a new character. Hitherto he had been silent, but observant; issuing his orders in a way not to excite the men, and with an air of unconcern that really had the effect to mislead most of them on the subject of his estimate of the danger they were in. Concealment, however, was no longer possible, and our young master came out as active as circumstances required, foremost in every exertion, and issuing his orders amid the gale trumpet-tongued. His manner, so full of animation, resolution, and exertion, probably prevented despair from getting the ascendency at that important moment. He was nobly sustained by both his mates; and three or four of the older seamen now showed themselves men to be relied on to the last.

The first step was to anchor. Fortunately, the foresight of Gardiner had everything ready for this indispensable precaution. Without anchoring, ten minutes would probably have carried the schooner directly down upon the breakers, leaving no hope for the life of any on board her, and breaking her up into chips. Both bowers were let go at once, and long ranges of cable given. The schooner was snubbed without parting anything, and was immediately brought head to sea.

This relieved her at once, and there was a moment when her people fancied she might ride out the gale where she was, could they only get clear of the wreck. Axes, hatchets, and knives were freely used, and Roswell Gardiner saw the mass of spars and rigging float clear of him with a delight he did not desire to conceal. As it drove to leeward, he actually cheered. A lead was instantly dropped alongside, in order to ascertain whether the anchors held. This infallible test gave the melancholy certainty that the schooner was still drifting her length in rather less than two minutes.

The only hope now was that the flukes of the anchors might catch in better holding-ground than they had yet met with. The bottom was hard sand, however, which never gives a craft the chance that it gets from mud. By Roswell Gardiner's calculations, an hour, at the most, would carry them into the breakers; possibly less time. The *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole was to windward a cable's length when this accident happened to her consort, and about half a mile to the southward. Just at that instant the breakers trended seaward, ahead of that schooner, rendering it indispensable for her to ware. This was done, bringing her head to the southward, and she now came struggling directly on toward her consort. The operation of waring had caused her to lose ground enough to bring her to leeward of the anchored craft, and nearer to the danger.

Roswell Gardiner stood on his own quarter-deck, anxiously watching the drift of the other schooner, as she drew near in her labored way, struggling ahead through billows that were almost as white as the breakers that menaced them with destruction to leeward. The anchored vessel, though drifting, had so slow a movement that it served to mark the steady and rapid set of its consort toward its certain fate. At first, it seemed to Gardiner that Daggett would pass just ahead of him, and he trembled for his cables, which occasionally appeared above water, stretched like bars of iron, for the distance of thirty or forty fathoms. But the leeward set of the vessel under way was too fast to give her any chance of bringing this new danger on her consort. When a cable's length distant, the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard *did* seem as if she might weather her consort; but, ere that short space was passed over, it was found that she fell off so fast, by means of her drift, as to carry her fairly clear of her stern. The two masters, holding with one hand to some permanent object by which to steady themselves, and each pressing his tarpaulin firmly down on his head with the other, had a minute's conversation when the schooners were nearest together.

"Do your anchors hold?" demanded Daggett, who was the first to speak, and who put his question as if he thought his own fate depended on the answer.

"I'm sorry to say they do not. We drift our length in about two minutes."

"That will put off the evil moment an hour or two. Look what a wake *we* are making!"

Sure enough, that wake was frightful! No sooner was the head of the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard fairly up with the stern of the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, than Gardiner perceived that she went off diagonally, moving quite as fast to leeward as she went ahead. This was so very obvious that a line drawn from the quarter of Roswell's craft, in a quartering direction, would almost have kept the other schooner in its range from the moment that her bow hove heavily past.

"God bless you!—God bless you!" cried Roswell Gardiner, waving his hand in adieu, firmly persuaded that he and the Vineyard master were never to meet again in this world. "The survivors must let the fate of the lost be known. At the pinch, I shall out boats, if I can."

The other made no answer. It would have been useless, indeed, to attempt it; since no human voice had power to force itself up against such a gale, the distance that had now to be overcome.

"That schooner will be in the breakers in half an hour," said Hazard, who stood by the side of young Gardiner. "Why don't he anchor! No power short of Divine Providence can save her."

"And Divine Providence will do it—thanks to Almighty God for his goodness!" exclaimed Roswell Gardiner. "Did you perceive that, Mr. Hazard?"

The "*that*" of our young mariner was, in truth, a most momentous omen. The wind had lulled so suddenly that the rags of sails which the other schooner carried actually flapped. At first our seamen thought she had been becalmed by the swell; but the change about themselves was too obvious to admit of any mistake. It blew terribly, again, for a minute; then there was another lull. Gardiner sprang to the lead-line to see the effect on his own vessel. She no longer dragged her anchor!

"God is with us!" exclaimed the young master—"blessed forever be His holy name!"

"And that of His only and *true* Son," responded a voice from one at his elbow.

Notwithstanding the emergency, and the excitement produced by this sudden change, Roswell Gardiner turned to see from whom this admonition had come. The oldest seaman on board, who was Stimson, a Kennebunk man, and who had been placed there to watch the schooner's drift, had uttered these unusual words. The fervor with which he spoke produced more impression on the young master than the words themselves; the former being very unusual among seafaring men, though the language was not so much so. Subsequently, Gardiner remembered that little incident, which was not without its results.

"I do believe, sir," cried Hazard, "that the gale is broken. It often happens on our own coast that the south-easters chop round suddenly, and come out nor'westers. I hope this will not be too late to save the Vineyard chap, though he slips down upon them breakers at a most fearful rate."

"There goes his foresail again—and here is another lull!" rejoined Gardiner. "I tell you, Mr. Hazard, we shall have a shift of wind—nothing short of which could save either of us from these breakers."

"Which comes from the marcy of God Almighty, through the intercession of his only Son!" added Stimson, with the same fervor of manner, though he spoke in a very low tone of voice.

Roswell Gardiner was again surprised, and for another moment he forgot the gale and its dangers. Gale it was no longer, however, for the lull was now decided, and the two cables of the schooner were distended only when the roll of the seas came in upon her. This wash of the waves still menaced the other schooner, driving her down toward the breakers, though less rapidly than before.

"Why don't the fellow anchor!" exclaimed Gardiner, in his anxiety, all care for himself being now over. "Unless he anchor, he will yet go into the white water and be lost!"

"So little does he think of that, that he is turning out his reefs," answered Hazard. "See! there is a hand aloft loosening his topsail—and there goes up a whole mainsail already!"

Sure enough, Daggett appeared more disposed to trust to his canvas than to his ground-tackle. In a very brief space of time he had his craft under whole sail, and was struggling in the puffs to claw off the land. Presently the wind ceased altogether, the canvas flapping so as to be audible to Gardiner and his companions at the distance of half a mile. Then the cloth was distended in the opposite direction, and the wind came off the land. The schooner's head was instantly brought to meet the seas, and the lead dropped at her side showed that she was moving in the right direction. These sudden changes, sometimes destructive, and sometimes providential as acts of mercy, always bring strong counter-currents of air in their train.

"Now we shall have it!" said Hazard; "a true nor'wester, and butt-end foremost!"

This opinion very accurately described that which followed. In ten minutes it was blowing heavily, in a direction nearly opposite to that which had been the previous current of the wind. As a matter of course, the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard drew off the land, wallowing through the

meeting billows that still came rolling in from the broad Atlantic; while the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond tended to the new currents of air, and rode, as it might be, suspended between the two opposing forces, with little or no strain on her cables. Gardiner expected to see his consort stand out to sea, and gain an offing; but, instead of this, Captain Daggett brought his schooner quite near to the disabled vessel, and anchored. This act of neighborly kindness was too unequivocal to require explanation. It was the intention of the Vineyard men to lie by their consort until she was relieved from all apprehensions of danger. The "butt-end" of the "nor'wester" was too large to admit of intercourse until next morning, when that which had been a small gale had dwindled to a good, steady breeze, and the seas had gone down, leaving comparatively smooth water all along the coast. The line of white water which marked the breakers was there, and quite visible; but it no longer excited apprehension. The jury-masts on board the disabled craft were got up; and what was very convenient, just at that moment, the wreck came floating out on the ebb, so near to her as to enable the boats to secure all the sails and most of the rigging. The main-boom, too, an excellent spar, was towed alongside and saved.

CHAPTER X.

"The shadow from thy brow shall melt,
The sorrow from thy strain:
But where thy earthly smile hath dwelt,
Our hearts shall thirst in vain."
—MRS. HEMANS.

As soon as it would do to put his boats in the water, or at daylight next morning, Captain Daggett came alongside of his consort. He was received with a seaman's welcome, and his offers of services were accepted, just as frankly as, under reversed circumstances, they would have been made. In all this there was a strange and characteristic admixture of neighborly and Christian kindness, blended with a keen regard of the main chance. If the former duties are rarely neglected by the descendants of the Puritans, it may be said with equal truth, that the latter are never lost sight of. Speculation and profit are regarded as so many integral portions of the duty of man; and, as our kinsmen of Old England have set up an idol to worship, in the form of aristocracy, so do our kinsmen of New England pay homage to the golden calf. In point of fact, Daggett had a double motive in now offering his services to Gardiner: the one being the discharge of his moral obligations, and the other a desire to remain near the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, lest she should visit the key, of which he had some very interesting memorandums, without having enough to find the place unless led there by those who were better informed on the subject of its precise locality than he was himself.

The boats of Daggett assisted in getting the wreck alongside, and in securing the sails and rigging. Then his people aided in fitting jury masts; and by noon both vessels got under way and stood along the coast to the southward and westward. Hatteras was no longer terrible, for the wind still stood at northwest, and they kept in view of those very breakers which, only the day before, they would have given the value of both vessels to be certain of never seeing again. That night they passed the formidable cape, a spit of sand projecting far to seaward, and which is on a low beach, and not on any mainland at all. Once around this angle in the coast, they had a lee, hauling up to the southwest. With the wind abeam, they stood on the rest of the day, picking up a pilot. The next night they doubled Cape Look Out, a very good landmark for those going north to keep in view, as a reminder of the stormy and sunken Hatteras, and arrived off Beaufort harbor just as the sun was rising the succeeding morning. By this time the northwester was done, and both schooners entered Beaufort, with a light southerly breeze, there being just water enough to receive them. This was the only place on all that coast into which it would have answered their purposes to go; and it was, perhaps, the very port of

all others that was best suited to supply the present wants of Roswell Gardiner.

Pine timber, and spars of all sorts, abounded in that region; and the "Banker," who acted as pilot, told our young master that he could get the very sticks he needed in one hour's time after entering the haven. This term of "Banker" applies to a scattering population of wreckers and fishermen, who dwell on the long, low, narrow beaches which extend along the whole of this part of the coast, reaching from Cape Fear to near Cape Henry, a distance of some hundred and fifty miles. Within lie the capacious sounds already mentioned, including Albemarle and Pamlico, and which form the watery portals to the sea-shores of all North Carolina. Well is the last headland of that region, but one which the schooners did not double, named Cape Fear. It is the commencement, on that side, of the dangerous part of the coast, and puts the mariner on his guard by its very appellation, admonishing him to be cautious and prudent.

Off the entrance of Beaufort, a very perfect and beautiful haven, if it had a greater depth of water, the schooners hove to, in waiting for the tide to rise a little; and Roswell Gardiner took that occasion to go on board the sister craft, and express to Daggett a sense of the obligations he felt for the services the other had rendered.

"Of course you will not think of going in, Captain Daggett," continued our hero, in dwelling on the subject, "after having put yourself, already, to so much unnecessary trouble. If I find the spars the 'Banker' talks of, I shall be out again in eight-and-forty hours, and we may meet, some months hence, off Cape Horn."

"I'll tell you what it is, Gar'ner," returned the Vineyard mariner, pushing the rum toward his brother master. "I'm a plain sort of a fellow, and don't make much talk when I do a thing, but I like good fellowship. We came near going, both of us—nearer than I ever was before, and escape wrackin'; but escape we did—and when men have gone through such trials in company, I don't like the notion of casting off till I see you all a-tanto ag'in, and with as many legs and arms as I carry myself. That's just my feelin', Gar'ner, and I won't say whether it's a right feelin' or not—help yourself."

"It's a right feeling, as between you and me, Captain Daggett, as I can answer for. My heart tells me you are right, and I thank you from it, for these marks of friendship. But you must not forget there are such persons as owners in this world. I shall have trouble enough on my hands with my owner, and I do not wish you to have trouble with yours. Here is a nice little breeze to take you out to sea again; and by passing to the southward of Bermuda, you can make a short cut, and hit the trades far enough to windward to answer all your purposes."

"Thankee, thankee, Gar'ner—I knew the road, and can find the places I'm going to, though no great navigator. Now, I never took a lunar in my life, and can't do anything with a chronometer; but as for finding the way between Martha's Vineyard and Cape Horn, I'll turn my back on no shipmaster living."

"I'm afraid, Captain Daggett, that we have both of us turned our backs on our true course, when we suffered ourselves to get jammed away down here, on Hatteras. Why, I never saw the place before, and never wish to see it again! It's as much out of the track of a whaler or sealer, as Jupiter is out of the track of Mars or Venus."

"Oh, there go your lunars, about which I know nothing and care nothing. I tell you, Gar'ner, a man with a good judgment can just as well jog about the 'arth, without any acquaintance with lunars, as he can with. Then, your sealer hasn't half as much need of your academy sort of navigation as another man. More than half of our calling is luck; and all the best sealing stations I ever heard of, have been blundered on by some chap who has lost his way. I despise lunars, if the truth must be said; yet I like to go straight to my port of destination. Take a little sugar with your rum-and-water—we Vineyard folks like sweetening."

"For which purpose, or that of going

straight to your port, Captain Daggett, you've come down here, on your way to the Pacific; or, about five hundred miles out of your way!"

"I came here for company, Gar'ner. We hadn't much choice, you must allow, for we couldn't have weathered the shoals on the other tack. I see no great harm in our positions, if you hadn't got dismasted. That's a two or three hundred dollar job, and may make your owner grumble a little, but it's no killing matter. I'll stick by you, and you can tell the deacon as much in the letter you'll write him, when we get in."

"It seems like doing injustice to *your* owners, as well as to my own, keeping you here, Captain Daggett," returned Roswell, innocently, for he had not the smallest suspicion of the true motive of all this apparent good-fellowship, "and I really wish you would now quit me."

"I couldn't think of it, Gar'ner. 'Twould make an awful talk on the Vineyard, was I to do anything of the sort. 'Stick to your consort,' is an eleventh commandment in our island."

"Which is the reason why there are so many old maids there, I suppose, Daggett," cried Roswell Gardiner laughing. "Well, I thank you for your kindness, and will endeavor to remember it when you may have occasion for some return. But, the tide must be making, and we ought to lose no time unnecessarily. Here's a lucky voyage to us both, Captain Daggett, and a happy return to sweethearts and wives."

Daggett tossed off his glass to this toast, and the two then went on deck. Roswell Gardiner thought that a kinder ship's company never sailed together than this of the *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole; for, notwithstanding the interest of every man on board depended on the returns of their own voyage, each and all appeared willing to stick by him and his craft so long as there was a possibility of being of any service.

Whalers and sealers do not ship their crews for wages in money, as is done with most vessels. So much depends on the exertions of the people in these voyages, that it is the practice to give every man a direct interest in the result. Consequently, all on board engage for a compensation to be derived from a division of the return cargo. The terms on which a party engages are called his "lay;" and he gets so many parts of a hundred, according to station, experience, and qualifications. The owner is paid for his risk and expenses in the same way, the vessel and outfits usually taking about two-thirds of the whole returns, while the officers and crew get the other. These conditions vary a little, as the proceeds of whaling and sealing rise or fall in the market, and also in reference to the cost of equipments. It follows that Captain Daggett and his crew were actually putting their hands into their own pockets when they lost time in remaining with the crippled craft. This Gardiner knew, and it caused him to appreciate their kindness at a rate so much higher than he might otherwise have done.

At first sight it might seem that all this unusual kindness was superfluous and of no avail. This, however, was not really the case, since the crew of the second schooner was of much real service in forwarding the equipment of the disabled vessel. Beaufort has an excellent harbor for vessels of a light draught of water like our two sealers; but the town is insignificant, and extra laborers, especially those of an intelligence suited to such work, very difficult to be had. At the bottom, therefore, Roswell Gardiner found his friendly assistance of much real advantage, the two crews pushing the work before them with as much rapidity as suited even a seaman's impatience. Aided by the crew of his consort, Gardiner got on fast with his repairs, and on the afternoon of the second day after he had entered Beaufort, he was ready to sail once more; his schooner probably in a better state of service than the day she left Oyster Pond.

The lightning-line did not exist at the period of which we are writing. It is our good fortune to be an intimate acquaintance of the distinguished citizen who bestowed this great gift on his country—one that will transmit his name to poster-

ity, side by side with that of Fulton. In his case, as in that of the last-named inventor, attempts have been made to rob him equally of the honors and the profits of his very ingenious invention. As respects the last, we hold that it is every hour becoming less and less possible for any American to maintain his rights against numbers. There is no question that the government of this great republic was intended to be one of well-considered aud upright principles, in which certain questions are to be referred periodically to majorities, as the wisest and most natural, as well as the most just mode of disposing of them. Such a government, well administered, and with an accurate observance of its governing principles, would probably be the best that human infirmity will allow men to administer; but when the capital mistake is made of supposing that mere numbers are to control all things, regardless of those great fundamental laws that the state has adopted for its own restraint, it may be questioned if so loose, and capricious, and selfish a system is not in great danger of becoming the very worst scheme of polity that cupidity ever set in motion.

The tendency—not the *spirit* of the institutions, the two things being the very antipodes of each other, though common minds are so apt to confound them—the *tendency* of the institutions of this country, in flagrant opposition to their *spirit* or *intentions*, which were devised expressly to restrain the disposition of men to innovate, is out of all question to foster this great abuse, and to place numbers above principles, even when the principles were solemnly adopted expressly to bring numbers under the control of a sound fundamental law. This influence of numbers, this dire mistake of the very nature of liberty, by placing men and their passions above those great laws of right which come direct from God himself, is increasing in force, and threatens consequences which may set at naught all the well-devised schemes of the last generation for the security of the state and the happiness of that very people, who can never know either security or even peace, until they learn to submit themselves, without a thought of resistance, to those great rules of right which in truth form the *spirit* of their institutions, and which are only too often in opposition to their own impulses and motives.

We pretend to no knowledge on the subject of the dates of discoveries in the arts and sciences, but well do we remember the earnestness and single-minded devotion to a laudable purpose, with which our worthy friend first communicated to us his ideas on the subject of using the electric spark by way of a telegraph. It was in Paris, and during the winter of 1831–2, and the succeeding spring, a time when we were daily together; and we have a satisfaction in recording this date, that others may prove better claims if they can. Had Morse set his great invention on foot thirty years earlier, Roswell Gardiner might have communicated with his owner, and got a reply, ere he again sailed, considerable as was the distance between them. As things then were, he was fain to be content with writing a letter, which was put into the deacon's hand about a week after it was written, by his niece, on his own return from a short journey to Southold, whither he had been to settle and discharge a tardy claim against his schooner.

"Here is a letter for you, uncle," said Mary Pratt, struggling to command her feelings, though she blushed with the consciousness of her own interest in the missive. "It came from the Harbor, by some mistake; Baiting Joe bringing it across just after you left home."

"A letter with a post-mark—'Beaufort, N. C.' Who in natur' can this letter be from? What a postage, too, to charge on a letter! Fifty cents!"

"That is a proof, sir, that Beaufort must be a long way off. Besides, the letter is double. I think the handwriting is Roswell's."

Had the niece fired a six-pounder under her uncle's ears, he would scarcely have been more startled. He even turned pale, and instead of breaking the wafer as he had been about to do, he actually shrunk

from performing the act, like one afraid to proceed.

"What can this mean?" said the deacon, taking a moment to recover his voice. "Gar'ner's handwriting! So it is, I declare. If that imprudent young man has lost my schooner, I'll never forgive him in this world, whatever a body may be *forced* to do in the next!"

"It is not necessary to believe anything as bad as that, uncle. Letters are often written at sea, and sent in by vessels that are met. I dare say Roswell has done just this."

"Not he—not he—the careless fellow! He has lost that schooner, and all my property is in the hands of wrackers, who are worse than so many rats in the larder. 'Beaufort, N. C.' Yes, that must be one of the Bahamas, and N. C. stands for New Providence. Ah's me! Ah's me!"

"But N. C. does *not* stand for New Providence—it would be N. P. in that case, uncle."

"N. C. or N. P., they sound so dreadfully alike that I don't know what to think! Take the letter and open it. Oh! how big it is!—there must be a protest, or some other costly thing, inclosed."

Mary did take the letter, and she opened it, though with trembling hands. The inclosure soon appeared, and the first glance of her eye told her it was a letter addressed to herself.

"What is it, Mary? What is it, my child? Do not be afraid to tell me," said the deacon, in a low, faltering voice. "I hope I know how to meet misfortunes with Christian fortitude. Has it one of them awful-looking seals that Notary Publics use when they want money?"

Mary blushed rosy red, and she appeared very charming at that moment, though as resolute as ever to give her hand only to a youth whose "God should be her God."

"It is a letter to me, sir—nothing else, I do assure you, uncle. Roswell often writes to me, as you know; he has sent one of his letters inclosed in this to you."

"Yes, yes—I'm glad it's no worse. Well, where was his letter written? Does he mention the latitude and longitude? It will be some comfort to learn that he was well to the southward and eastward."

Mary's color disappeared, and a paleness came over her face, as she ran through the first few lines of the letter. Then she summoned all her resolution, and succeeded in telling her uncle the facts.

"A misfortune has befallen poor Roswell," she said, her voice trembling with emotion, "though it does not seem to be half as bad as it might have been. The letter is written at Beaufort, in North Carolina, where the schooner has put in to get new masts, having lost those with which she sailed in a gale of wind off Cape Hatteras."

"Hatteras!" interrupted the deacon, groaning—"what in natur' had my vessel to do down there?"

"I am sure I don't know, sir—but I had better read you the contents of Roswell's letter, and then you will hear the whole story."

Mary now proceeded to read aloud. Gardiner gave a frank, explicit account of all that had happened since he parted with his owner, concealing nothing, and not attempting even to extenuate his fault. Of the *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole he wrote at large, giving it as his opinion that Captain Daggett really possessed some clew—what, he did not know—to the existence of the sealing islands, though he rather thought that he was not very accurately informed of their precise position. As respected the key Roswell was silent, for it did not at all occur to him that Daggett knew anything of that part of his own mission. In consequence of this opinion, not the least suspicion of the motive of the Vineyard-man, in sticking by him, presented itself to Gardiner's mind; and nothing on the subject was communicated in the letter. On the contrary, our young master was quite eloquent in expressing his gratitude to Daggett and his crew, for the assistance they had volunteered, and without which he could not have been ready to go to sea again in less than a week. As it was, the letter was partly written as the schooner repassed the bar, and was sent ashore by the pilot to be

mailed. This fact was stated in full, in a postscript.

"Volunteered!" groaned the deacon aloud. "As if a man ever volunteers to work without his pay!"

"Roswell tells us that Captain Daggett did, uncle," answered Mary, "and that it is understood between them he is to make no charge for his going into Beaufort, or for anything he did while there. Vessels often help each other in this kind way, I should hope, for the sake of Christian charity, sir."

"Not without salvage, not without salvage! Charity is a good thing, and it is our duty to exercise it on all occasions; but salvage comes into charity all the same as into any other interest. This schooner will ruin me, I fear, and leave me in my old age to be supported by the town!"

"That can hardly happen, uncle, since you owe nothing for her, and have your farms, and all your other property, unencumbered. It is not easy to see how the schooner can ruin you."

"Yes, I am undone," returned the deacon, beating the floor with his foot in nervous agitation; "as much undone as ever Roswell Gar'ner's father was; and he might have been the richest man between Oyster Pond and Riverhead, had he kept out of the way of speculation. I remember him much better off than I am myself, and he died but little more than a beggar. Yes, yes; I see how it is; this schooner has undone me!"

"But Roswell sends an account of all that he has paid, and draws a bill on you for its payment. The entire amount is but one hundred and sixteen dollars and seventy-two cents."

"That's not for salvage. The next thing will be a demand for salvage in behalf of the owners and crew of the *Sea Lion* of Humses' Hull! I know how it will be, child! I know how it will be! Gar'ner has undone me, and I shall go down into my grave a beggar, as his father has done already."

"If such be the fact, uncle, no one but I would be the sufferer, and I will strive not to grieve over your losses. But here is a paper that Roswell has inclosed in his letter to me, by mistake no doubt. See, sir; it is an acknowledgment, signed by Captain Daggett and all his crew, admitting that they went into Beaufort with Roswell out of good feeling, and allowing that they have no claims to salvage. Here it is, sir; you can read it for yourself."

The deacon did not only read it—he almost devoured the paper, which, as Mary suggested, had been inclosed in her letter by mistake. The relief produced by this document so far composed the uncle, that he not only read Gardiner's letter himself, with a very close attention to its contents, but he actually forgave the cost of the repairs incurred at Beaufort. While he was in the height of his joy at this change in the aspect of things, the niece stole into her own room in order to read the missive she had received by herself.

The tears that Mary Pratt profusely shed over Roswell's letter were both sweet and bitter. The manifestations of his affection for her, which were manly and frank, brought tears of tenderness from her eyes; while the recollection of the width of the chasm that separated them had the effect to embitter these proofs of love. Most females would have lost the sense of duty which sustained our heroine in this severe trial, and, in accepting the man of their heart, would have trusted to time, and their own influence, and the mercy of Divine Providence, to bring about the changes they desired; but Mary Pratt could not thus blind herself to her own high obligations. The tie of husband and wife she rightly regarded as the most serious of all the obligations we can assume, and she could not—*would* not plight her vows to any man whose "God was not her God."

Still there was much of sweet consolation in this little-expected letter from Roswell. He wrote, as he always did, simply and naturally, and attempted no concealments. This was just as true of his acts as the master of the schooner, as it was in his character of a suitor. To Mary he told the whole story of his weakness, ac-

knowledging that a silly spirit of pride, which would not permit him to seem to abandon a trial of the qualities of the two schooners, had induced him to stand on to the westward longer than he should otherwise have done, and the currents had come to assist in increasing the danger. As for Daggett, he supposed him to have been similarly influenced; though he did not withhold his expressions of gratitude for the generous manner in which that seaman had stuck to him to the last.

For weary months did Mary Pratt derive sweet consolation from her treasure of a letter. It was, perhaps, no more than human nature, or woman's nature at least, that, in time, she got most to regard those passages which best answered to the longings of her own heart; and that she came at last to read the missive, forgetful, in a degree, that it was written by one who had deliberately, and as a matter of faith, adopted the idea that the Redeemer was not, in what may be called the catholic sense of the term, the Son of God. The papers gave an account of the arrival of the "*Twin Sea Lions*," as the article styled them, in the port of Beaufort, to repair damages; and of their having soon sailed again in company. This paragraph she cut out of the journal in which it met her eye, and inclosing it in Roswell's last letter, there was not a day in the succeeding year in which both were not in her hand, and read for the hundredth time or more. These proofs of tenderness, however, are not to be taken as evidence of any lessening of principle, or as signs of a disposition to let her judgment and duty submit to her affection. So far from this, her resolution grew with reflection, and her mind became more settled in a purpose that she deemed sacred, the longer she reflected on the subject. But her prayers in behalf of her absent lover grew more frequent and much more fervent.

In the meantime the *Twin Lions* sailed. On leaving Beaufort they ran off the coast with a smart breeze from southwest, making a leading wind of it. There had been some variance of opinion between Daggett and Gardiner, touching the course they ought to steer. The last was for hauling up higher and passing to the southward of Bermuda, while the first contended for standing nearly due east and going to the northward of those islands. Gardiner felt impatient to repair his blunder, and make the shortest cut he could; whereas Daggett reasoned more coolly and took the winds into the account, keeping in view the main results of the voyage. Perhaps the last wished to keep his consort away from all the keys until he was compelled to alter his course in a way that would leave no doubt of his intentions. Of one thing the last was now certain; he knew by a long trial that the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond could not very easily run away from the *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole, and he was fully resolved that she should not escape from him in the night, or in the squalls. As for Roswell Gardiner, not having the smallest idea of looking for his key, until he came north, after visiting the antarctic circle, he had no notion whatever of the reason why the other stuck to him so closely; and, least of all, why he wished to keep him clear of the West Indies, until ready to make a descent on his El Dorado.

Beaufort lies about two degrees to the northward of the four hundred rocks, islets, and small islands, which are known as the Bermudas; an advanced naval station, that belongs to a rival commercial power, and which is occupied by that power solely as a check on this republic in the event of war. Had the views of real statesmen prevailed in America, instead of those of mere politicians, the whole energy of this republic would have been long since directed to the object of substituting our own flag for that of England in these islands. As things are, there they exist; a station for hostile fleets, a receptacle for prizes, and a depot for the munitions of war, as if expressly designed by nature to hold the whole American coast in command. While little men with great names are wrangling about southwestern acquisitions and northeastern boundaries, that are of no real moment to the growth and power of the republic,

these islands, that ought never to be out of the mind of the American statesman, have not yet entered into the account at all; a certain proof how little the minds that do, or ought to, influence events, are really up to the work they have been delegated to perform. Military expeditions have twice been sent from this country to Canada, when both the Canadas are not of one-half the importance to the true security and independence of the country—(no nation is independent until it holds the control of all its greater interests in its own hands)—as the Bermudas.

When England asked the cession of territory undoubtedly American, because it overshadowed Quebec, she should have been met with this plain proposition—"Give us the Bermudas, and we will exchange with you. You hold those islands as a check on our power, and we will hold the angle of Maine for a check on yours, unless you will consent to make a fair and mutual transfer. We will not attack you for the possession of the Bermudas, for we deem a just principle even more important than such an accession; but when you ask us to cede, we hold out our hands to take an equivalent in return. The policy of this nation is not to be influenced by saw-logs, but by these manifest, important, and ulterior interests. If you wish Maine, give us Bermuda in exchange, or go with your wishes ungratified." Happily, among us, events are stronger than men, and the day is not distant when the mere force of circumstances will compel the small-fry of diplomacy to see what the real interests and dignity of the republic demand in reference to this great feature of its policy.

Roswell Gardiner and Daggett had several discussions touching the manner in which they ought to pass those islands. There were about four degrees to spare between the trades and the Bermudas; and the former was of opinion that they might pass through this opening, and make a straighter wake than by going farther north. These consultations took place from quarter-deck to quarter-deck, as the two schooners ran off free, steering directly for the islands, as a sort of compromise between the two opinions. The distance from the main to the Bermudas is computed at about six hundred miles, which gave sufficient leisure for the discussion of the subject in all its bearings. The conversation was amicable, and the weather continuing mild, and the wind standing, they were renewed each afternoon, when the vessels closed, as if expressly to admit of the dialogue. In all this time, five days altogether, it was farther ascertained that the difference in sailing between the *Twin Lions*, as the sailors now began to call the two schooners, was barely perceptible. If anything, it was slightly in favor of the Vineyard craft, though there yet remained many of the vicissitudes of the seas, in which to make the trial. While this uncertainty as to the course prevailed, the low land appeared directly ahead, when Daggett consented to pass it to the southward, keeping the cluster in sight, however, as they went steadily on toward the southward and eastward.

CHAPTER XI.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank."—MAZEPPA.

ROSWELL GARDINER felt as if he could breathe more freely when they had run the Summers Group fairly out of sight, and the last hummock had sunk into the waves of the west. He was now fairly quit of America, and hoped to see no more of it until he made the well-known rock that points the way into the most magnificent of all the havens of the earth, the bay of Rio de Janeiro. Travelers dispute whether the palm ought to be given to this port, or to those of Naples and Constantinople. Each, certainly, has its particular claims to surpassing beauty, which ought to be kept in view in coming to a decision. Seen from its outside, with its minarets, and Golden Horn, and Bosphorus, Constantinople is probably the most glorious spot on earth. Ascend its mountains and overlook the gulfs of Salerno and Gaeta, as

well as its own waters, the *Campagna Felici*, and the memorials of the past, all seen in the witchery of an Italian atmosphere, and the mind becomes perfectly satisfied that nothing equal is to be found elsewhere; but enter the bay of Rio, and take the whole of the noble panorama in at a glance, and even the experienced traveler is staggered with the stupendous, as well as bewitching, character of the loveliness that meets his eye. Witchery is a charm that peculiarly belongs to Italy, as all must feel who have ever been brought within its influence; but it is a witchery that is more or less shared by all regions of low latitudes.

Our two *Sea Lions* met with no adventures worthy of record until they got well to the southward of the equator. They had been unusually successful in getting through the calm latitudes; and forty-six days from Montauk, they spoke a Sag Harbor whaler, homeward bound, that had come out from Rio only the preceding week, where she had been to dispose of her oil. By this ship, letters were sent home; and as Gardiner could now tell the deacon that he should touch at Rio even before the time first anticipated, he believed that he should set the old man's heart at peace. A little occurrence that took place the very day they parted with the whaler, added to the pleasure this opportunity of communicating with the owner had afforded. As the schooners were moving on in company, about a cable's length asunder, Hazard saw a sudden and extraordinary movement on board the Vineyard *Lion*, as the men now named that vessel, to distinguish her from her consort.

"Look out for a spout!" shouted the mate to Stimson, who happened to be on the fore-topsail-yard at work, when this unexpected interruption to the quiet of the passage occurred. "There is a man overboard from the other schooner, or they see a spout."

"A spout! a spout!" shouted Stimson, in return; "and a spalm (sperm, or spermaceti, was meant) whale in the bargain! Here he is, sir, two p'ints on our weather beam."

This was enough. If any one has had the misfortune to be in a coach drawn by four horses, when a sudden fright starts them off at speed, he can form a pretty accurate notion of the movement that now took place on board of Deacon Pratt's craft. Every one seemed to spring into activity, as if a single will directed a common set of muscles. Those who were below, literally "tumbled up," as the seamen express it, and those who were aloft, slid down to the deck like flashes of lightning. Captain Gardiner sprang out of his cabin, seemingly at a single bound; at another, he was in the whale-boat that Hazard was in the very act of lowering into the water, as the schooner rounded-to. Perceiving himself anticipated here, the mate turned to the boat on the other quarter, and was in her, and in the water, almost as soon as his commanding officer.

Although neither of the schooners was thoroughly fitted for a whaler, each had lines, lances, harpoons, etc., in readiness in their quarter-boats, prepared for any turn of luck like this which now offered. The process of paddling up to whales, which is now so common in the American ships, was then very little or not at all resorted to. It is said that the animals have got to be so shy, in consequence of being so much pursued, that the old mode of approaching them will not suffice, and that it now requires much more care and far more art to take one of these creatures, than it did thirty years since. On this part of the subject we merely repeat what we hear, though we think we can see an advantage in the use of the paddle that is altogether independent of that of the greater quiet of that mode of forcing a boat ahead. He that paddles looks *ahead*, and the approach is more easily regulated, when the whole of the boat's crew are apprised, by means of their own senses, of the actual state of things, than when they attain their ideas of them through the orders of an officer. The last must govern in all cases, but the men are prepared for them, when they can see what is going on, and will be more likely to act with promptitude and intelligence, and will be less liable to make mistakes.

The four boats, two from each schooner, dropped into the water nearly about the same time. Daggett was at the steering-oar of one, as was Roswell at that of another. Hazard, and Macy, the chief mate of the Vineyard craft, were at the steering-oars of the two remaining boats. All pulled in the direction of the spot on the ocean where the spouts had been seen. It was the opinion of those who had been aloft, that there were several *fish;* and it was certain that they were of the most valuable species, or the spermaceti, one barrel of the oil of which was worth about as much as the oil of three of the ordinary sort, or that of the *right* whale, supposing them all to yield the same quantity in number of barrels. The nature or species of the fish was easily enough determined by the spouts; the right whale throwing up two high arched jets of water, while the spermaceti throws but a single, low, bushy one.

It was not long ere the boats of the two captains came abreast of each other, and within speaking distance. A stern rivalry was now apparent in every countenance, the men pulling might and main, and without even a smile among them all. Every face was grave, earnest, and determined; every arm strung to its utmost powers of exertion. The men rowed beautifully, being accustomed to the use of their long oars in rough water, and in ten minutes they were all fully a mile dead to windward of the two schooners.

Few things give a more exalted idea of the courage and ingenuity of the human race than to see adventurers set forth, in a mere shell, on the troubled waters of the open ocean, to contend with and capture an animal of the size of the whale. The simple circumstance that the last is in its own element, while its assailants are compelled to approach it in such light and fragile conveyances, that, to the unpracticed eye, it is sufficiently difficult to manage them amid the rolling waters, without seeking so powerful an enemy to contend with, indicates the perilous nature of the contest. But, little of all this did the crews of our four boats now think. They had before them the objects, or *one* of the objects, rather, of their adventure, and so long as that was the case, no other view but that of prevailing could rise before their eyes.

"How is it, Gar'ner?" called out the Vineyard master, "shall it be shares? or does each schooner whale on her own hook?"

This was asked in a friendly way, and apparently with great indifference as to the nature of the reply, but with profound art. It was Daggett's wish to establish a sort of partnership, which, taken in connection with the good feeling created by the affair at Beaufort, would be very apt to lead on to further and more important association. Luckily for Gardiner, an idea crossed his mind, just as he was about to reply, which induced the wisest answer. It was the thought, that competition would be more likely to cause exertion than a partnership, and that the success of all would better repay them for the toils and risks, should each vessel act exclusively for itself. This is the principle that renders the present state of society more healthful and advantageous than that which the friends of the different systems of associating, that are now so much in vogue, wish to substitute in its place. Individuality is an all-important feeling in the organization of human beings into communities; and the political economist who does not use it as his most powerful auxiliary in advancing civilization, will soon see it turn round in its tracks, and become a dead weight; indulging its self-love, by living with the minimum of exertion, instead of pushing his private advantage, with the maximum.

"I think each vessel had better work for herself and her owners," answered Roswell Gardiner.

As the schooners were in the trades, there was a regular sea running, and one that was neither very high nor much broken. Still, the boats were lifted on it like egg-shells or bubbles, the immense power of the ocean raising the largest ships, groaning under their vast weight of ordnance, as if they were feathers. In a few minutes, Gardiner and Daggett became a little more separated, each looking

eagerly for the spouts, which had not been seen by either since quitting his vessel. All this time the two mates came steadily on, until the whole of the little fleet of boats was now not less than a marine league distant from the schooners. The vessels themselves were working up to windward, to keep as near to the boats as possible, making short tacks under reduced canvas; a ship-keeper, the cook, steward, and one or two other hands, being all who were left on board them.

We shall suppose that most of our readers are sufficiently acquainted with the general character of that class of animals to which the whale belongs, to know that all of the genus breathe the atmospheric air, which is as necessary for life to them as it is to man himself. The only difference in this respect is that the whale can go longer without renewing his respiration than all purely land-animals, though he must come up to breathe at intervals, or die. It is the exhaling of the old stock of air, when he brings the "blow-holes," as seamen call the outlets of his respiratory organs, to the surface, that forces the water upward, and forms the "spouts," which usually indicate to the whalers the position of their game. The "spouts" vary in appearance, as has been mentioned, owing to the number and situation of the orifices by which the exhausted air escapes. No sooner is the vitiated air exhaled, than the lungs receive a new supply; and the animal either remains near the surface, rolling about and sporting amid the waves, or descends again, a short distance, in quest of its food. This food, also, varies materially in the different species. The right whale is supposed to live on what may be termed marine insects, or the molluscæ of the ocean, which it is thought he obtains by running in the parts of the sea where they most abound; arresting them by the hairy fibers which grow on the laminæ of bone that, in a measure, compose his jaws, having no teeth. The spermaceti, however, is furnished with regular grinders, which he knows very well how to use, and with which he often crushes the boats of those who come against him. Thus, the whalers have but one danger to guard against, in assaulting the common animal, viz., his flukes, or tail; while the spermaceti, in addition to the last means of defense, possesses those of his teeth or jaws. As this latter animal is quite one-third head, he has no very great dissemblance to the alligator in this particular.

By means of this brief description of the physical formation and habits of the animals of which our adventurers were in pursuit, the general reader will be the better able to understand that which it is our duty now to record. After rowing the distance named, the boats became a little separated, in their search for the fish. That spouts had been seen, there was no doubt; though, since quitting the schooners, no one in the boats had got a further view of the fish—if fish, animals with respiratory organs can be termed. A good lookout for spouts had been kept by each man at the steering-oars, but entirely without success. Had not Roswell and Daggett, previous to leaving their respective vessels, seen the signs of whales with their own eyes, it is probable that they would now have both been disposed to return, calling in their mates. But, being certain that the creatures they sought were not far distant, they continued slowly to separate, each straining his eyes in quest of his game, as his boat rose on the summit of the rolling and tossing waves. Water in motion was all around them; and the schooners working slowly up against the trades, was all that rewarded their vigilant and anxious looks. Twenty times did each fancy that he saw the dark back, or head, of the object he sought; but as often did it prove to be no more than a lipper of water, rolling up into a hummock ere it broke, or melting away again into the general mass of the unquiet ocean. When it is remembered that the surface of the sea is tossed into a thousand fantastic outlines, as its waves roll along, it can readily be imagined how such mistakes could arise.

At length Gardiner discerned that which his practiced eye well knew. It was the flukes or extremity of the tail of an enor-

mous whale, distant from him less than a quarter of a mile, and in such a position as to place the animal at about the same breadth of water from Daggett. It would seem that both of these vigilant officers perceived their enemy at the same instant, for each boat started for it as if it had been instinct with life. The pike or the shark could not have darted toward its prey with greater promptitude, and scarcely with greater velocity than these two boats. Very soon the whole herd was seen, swimming along against the wind, an enormous bull whale leading, while half a dozen calves kept close to the sides of their dams, or sported among themselves, much as the offspring of land animals delight in their youth and strength. Presently a mother rolled lazily over on her side, permitting its calf to suck. Others followed this example; and then the leader of the herd ceased his passage to windward, but began to circle the spot, as if in complaisance to those considerate nurses who thus waited on the wants of their young. At this interesting moment the boats came glancing in among the herd.

Had the competition and spirit of rivalry been at a lower point among our adventurers than it actually was, greater caution might have been observed. It is just as dangerous to assault a whale that has its young to defend, as to assault most other animals. We know that the most delicate women become heroines in such straits; and nature seems to have given to the whole sex, whether endowed with reason or only with an instinct, the same disposition to die in defense of the helpless creatures that so much depend on their care. But no one there now thought of the risk he ran, it being the Vineyard against Oyster Pond, one *Sea Lion* against the other, and, in many instances, pocket against pocket.

Roswell, as if disdaining all meaner game, pulled quite through the herd, and laid the bows of his boat directly on the side of the old bull—a hundred-barrel whale at the very least. No sooner did the enormous creature feel the harpoon, than, throwing its flukes upward, it descended into the depths of the ocean, with a velocity that caused smoke to arise from the chuck through which the line passed. Ordinarily, the movement of a whale is not much faster than an active man can walk; and, when it runs on the surface, its speed seldom exceeds that of a swift vessel under full sail; but, when suddenly startled, with the harpoon in its blubber, the animal is capable of making a prodigious exertion. When struck, it usually "sounds," as it is termed, or runs downward, sometimes to the depth of a mile; and it is said that instances have been known in which the fish inflicted great injury on itself, by dashing its head against rocks.

In the case before us, after running out three or four hundred fathoms of line, the "bull" to which Gardiner had "fastened," came up to the surface, "blowed," and began to move slowly toward the herd again. No sooner was the harpoon thrown, than a change took place in the disposition of the crew of the boat, which it may be well to explain. The harpoon is a barbed javelin, fastened to a staff to give it momentum. The line is attached to this weapon, the proper use of which is to "fasten" to the fish, though it sometimes happens that the animal is killed at the first blow. This is when the harpoon has been hurled by a very skillful and vigorous harpooner. Usually, this weapon penetrates some distance into the blubber in which a whale is encased, and when it is drawn back by the plunge of the fish, the barbed parts get imbedded in the tough integuments of the hide, together with the blubber, and hold. The iron of the harpoon being very soft, the shank bends under the strain of the line, leaving the staff close to the animal's body. Owing to this arrangement the harpoon offers less resistance to the water, as the whale passes swiftly through it. No sooner did the boat-steerer, or harpooner, cast his "irons," as whalers term the harpoon, than he changed places with Roswell, who left the steering-oar, and proceeded forward to wield the lance, the weapon with which the victory is finally consummated.

The men now "peaked" their oars, as it is termed; or they placed the handles in cleats made to receive them, leaving the blades elevated in the air, so as to be quite clear of the water. This was done to get rid of the oars, in readiness for other duty, while the instruments were left in the tholes, to be resorted to in emergencies. This gives a whale-boat a peculiar appearance, with its five long oars raised in the air, at angles approaching forty-five degrees. In the meantime, as the bull approached the herd, or school,* as the whalers term it, the boat's crew began to haul in line, the boat-steerer coiling it away carefully, in a tub placed in the stern-sheets purposely to receive it. Any one can understand how important it was that this part of the duty should be well performed, since bights of line running out of a boat, dragged by a whale, would prove so many snares to the men's legs, unless previously disposed of in a place proper to let it escape without this risk. For this reason it is, that the end of a line is never permitted to run out at the bow of a boat at all. It might do some injury in its passage, and an ax is always applied near the bows, when it is found necessary to cut from a whale.

It was so unusual a thing to see a fish turn toward the spot where it was struck, that Roswell did not know what to make of this maneuver in his bull. At first he supposed the animal meant to make fight, and set upon him with his tremendous jaws; but it seemed that caprice or alarm directed the movement; for, after coming within a hundred yards of the boat, the creature turned and commenced sculling away to windward, with wide and nervous sweeps of its formidable flukes. It is by this process that all the fish of this genus force their way through the water, their tails being admirably adapted to the purpose. As the men had showed the utmost activity in hauling in upon the line, by the time the whale went off to windward again they had got the boat up within about four hundred feet of him.

*We suppose this word to be a corruption of the Dutch "*schule*," which, we take it, means the same thing.

Now commenced a tow, dead to windward, it being known that a fish, when struck, seldom runs at first in any other direction. The rate at which the whale moved was not at the height of his speed, though it exceeded six knots. Occasionally, this rate was lessened, and in several instances his speed was reduced to less than half of that just mentioned. Whenever one of the lulls occurred, the men would haul upon the line, gradually getting nearer and nearer to the fish, until they were within fifty feet of his tremendous flukes. Here, a turn was taken with the line, and an opportunity to use the lance was waited for.

Whalers say that a forty-barrel bull of the spermaceti sort is much the most dangerous to deal with of all the animals of this species. The larger bulls are infinitely the most powerful, and drive these half-grown creatures away in herds by themselves, that are called "pads," a circumstance that probably renders the young bull discontented and fierce. The last is not only more active than the larger animal, but is much more disposed to make fight, commonly giving his captors the greatest trouble. This may be one of the reasons why Roswell Gardiner now found himself towing at a reasonable rate, so close upon the flukes of a hundred-barrel whale. Still, there was that in the movements of this animal that induced our hero to be exceedingly wary. He was now two leagues from the schooners, and half that distance from the other boats, neither of which had as yet fastened to a fish. This latter circumstance was imputed to the difficulty the different officers had in making their selections—cows, of the spermaceti breed, when they give suck, being commonly light, and yielding, comparatively, very small quantities of head-matter and oil. In selecting the bull, Roswell had shown his judgment, the male animal commonly returning to its conquerors twice the profit that is derived from the female.

The whale to which Roswell was fast continued sculling away to windward for quite two hours, causing the men to entirely lose sight of the other boats, and

bringing the topsails of the schooners themselves down to the water's edge. Fortunately, it was not yet noon, and there were no immediate apprehensions from the darkness; nor did the bull appear to be much alarmed, though the boat was towing so close in the rear. At first, or before the irons were thrown, the utmost care had been taken not to make a noise; but the instant the crew were "fast," whispers were changed into loud calls, and orders were passed in shouts, rather than in verbal commands. The wildest excitement prevailed among the men, strangely blended with a cool dexterity; but it was very apparent that a high sporting fever was raging among them. Gardiner himself was much the coolest man in his own boat, as became his station and very responsible duties.

Stimson, the oldest and the best seaman in the schooner—he who had admonished his young commander on the subject of the gratitude due to the Deity—acted as the master's boat-steerer, having first performed the duty of harpooner. It was to him that Gardiner now addressed the remarks he made, after having been fastened to his whale fully two hours.

"This fellow is likely to give us a long drag," said the master, as he stood balancing himself on the clumsy cleats in the bows of the boat, using his lance as an adept in saltation poises his pole on the wire, the water curling fairly above the gunwale forward, with the rapid movement of the boat; "I would haul up alongside, and give him the lance, did I not distrust them flukes. I believe he knows we are here."

"That he does—that does he, Captain Gar'ner. It's always best to be moderate and wait your time, sir. There's a jerk about that chap's flukes that I don't like myself, and it's best to see what he would be at, before we haul up any nearer. Don't you see, sir, that every minute or two he strikes down, instead of sculling off handsomely and with a wide sweep, as becomes a whale?"

"That is just the motion I distrust, Stephen, and I shall wait a bit to see what he would be at. I hope those shipkeepers will be busy, and work the schooners well up to windward before it gets to be dark. Our man is asleep half his time, and is apt to let the vessel fall off a point or two."

"Mr. Hazard gave him caution to keep a bright lookout, sir, and I think he'll be apt to—look out, sir!—look out!"

This warning was well-timed; for, just at that instant, the whale ceased sculling, and lifting its enormous tail high in the air, it struck five or six blows on the surface of the water, that made a noise which might have been heard half a league, besides filling the atmosphere immediately around him with spray. As the tail first appeared in the air, line was permitted to run out of the boat, increasing the distance between its bows and the flukes to quite a hundred feet. Nothing could better show the hardy characters of the whalers than the picture then presented by Roswell Gardiner and his companions. In the midst of the Atlantic, leagues from their vessel, and no other boat in sight, there they sat patiently waiting the moment when the giant of the deep should abate in his speed, or in his antics, to enable them to approach and complete their capture. Most of the men sat with their arms crossed, and bodies half turned, regarding the scene, while the two officers, the master and boat-steerer, if the latter could properly be thus designated, watched each evolution with a keenness of vigilance that let nothing like a sign or a symptom escape them.

Such was the state of things, the whale still threshing the sea with his flukes, when a cry among his men induced Roswell for a moment to look aside. There came Daggett fast to a small bull, which was running directly in the wind's eye with great speed, dragging the boat after him, which was towing astern at a distance of something like two hundred fathoms. At first, Roswell thought he should be compelled to cut from his whale, so directly toward his own boat did the other animal direct his course. But, intimidated, most probably, by the tremendous blows with which the larger bull continued to belabor the ocean, the smaller animal

sheered away in time to avoid a collision, though he now began to circle the spot where his dreaded monarch lay. This change of course gave rise to a new sort of apprehension. If the smaller bull should continue to encircle the larger, there was great reason to believe that the line of Daggett might get entangled with the boat of Gardiner, and produce a collision that might prove fatal to all there. In order to be ready to meet this danger, Roswell ordered his crew to be on the lookout, and to have their knives in a state for immediate use. It was not known what might have been the consequence of this circular movement as respects the two boats; for, before they could come together, Daggett's line actually passed into the mouth of Gardiner's whale, and drawing up tight into the angle of his jaws, set the monster in motion with a momentum and power that caused the iron to draw from the smaller whale, which by this time had more than half encircled the animal. So rapid was the rate of running now, that Roswell was obliged to let out line, his whale sounding to a prodigious depth. Daggett did the same, unwilling to cut as long as he could hold on to his line.

At the expiration of five minutes the large bull came up again for breath, with both lines still fast to him; the one in the regular way, or attached to the harpoon, and the other jammed in the jaws of the animal by means of the harpoon and staff, which formed a sort of toggle at the angle of his enormous mouth. In consequence of feeling this unusual tenant, the fish compressed its jaws together, thus rendering the fastening so much the more secure. As both boats had let run line freely while the whale was sounding, they now found themselves near a quarter of a mile astern of him, towing along, side by side, and not fifty feet asunder. If the spirit of rivalry had been aroused among the crew of these two boats before, it was now excited to a degree that menaced acts of hostility.

"You know, of course, Captain Daggett, that this is my whale," said Gardiner. "I was fast to him regularly, and was only waiting for him to become a little quiet to lance him, when your whale crossed his course, fouled your line, and has got you fast in an unaccountable way, but not according to whale law."

"I don't know that. I fastened to a whale, Captain Gar'ner, and am fast to a whale now. It must be *proved* that I have no right to the creatur' before I give him up."

Gardiner understood the sort of a man with whom he had to deal too well to waste words in idle remonstrances. Resolved to maintain his just rights at every hazard, he ordered his men to haul in upon the line, the movement of the whale becoming so slow as to admit of this measure. Daggett's crew did the same, and a warm contest existed between the two boats, as to who should now first close with the fish and kill it. This was not a moment for prudence and caution. It was "haul in—haul in, boys," in both boats, without any regard to the danger of approaching the whale. A very few minutes sufficed to bring the parties quite in a line with the flukes, Gardiner's boat coming up on the larboard or left-hand side of the animal, where its iron was fast, and Daggett's on the opposite, its line leading out of the jaws of the fish in that direction. The two masters stood erect on their respective clumsy cleats, each poising his lance, waiting only to get near enough to strike. The men were now at the oars, and without pausing for anything, both crews sprung to their ashen instruments, and drove the boats headlong upon the fish. Daggett, perhaps, was the coolest and most calculating at that moment, but Roswell was the most nervous and the boldest. The boat of the last actually hit the side of the whale, as its young commander drove his lance through the blubber, into the vitals of the fish. At the same instant Daggett threw his lance with consummate skill, and went to the quick. It was now "stern all!" for life, each boat backing off from the danger as fast as hands could urge. The sea was in a foam, the fish going into his "flurry" almost as soon as struck, and both crews were delighted to see the red of the blood mingling its deep hues with the

white of the troubled water. Once or twice the animal spouted, but it was a fluid dyed in his gore. In ten minutes it turned up and was dead.

CHAPTER XII.

"God save you, sir!"
"And you, sir! you are welcome."
"Travel you far on, or are you at the furthest?"
"Sir, at the furthest for a week or two."
—SHAKESPEARE.

GARDINER and Daggett met, face to face, on the carcass of the whale. Each struck his lance into the blubber, steadying himself by its handle; and each eyed the other in a way that betokened feelings awakened by a keen desire to defend his rights. It is a fault of American character—a fruit of the institutions, beyond a doubt—that renders men unusually indisposed to give up. This stubbornness of temperament, that so many mistake for a love of liberty and independence, is productive of much good, when the parties happen to be right, and of quite as much evil, when they happen to be wrong. It is ever the wisest, as, indeed, it is the noblest course, to defer to that which is just, with a perfect reliance on its being the course pointed out by the finger of infallible wisdom and truth. He who does this need feel no concern for his dignity, or for his success; being certain that it is intended that right shall prevail in the end, as prevail it will and does. But both our shipmasters were too much excited to feel the force of these truths; and there they stood, sternly regarding each other, as if it were their purpose to commence a new struggle for the possession of the leviathan of the deep.

"Captain Daggett," said Roswell sharply, "you are too old a whaler not to know whaling law. My irons were fast in this fish; I never have been loose from it since it was first struck, and my lance killed it. Under such circumstances, sir, I am surprised that any man, who knows the usages among whalers, should have stuck by the creature as you have done."

"It's in my natur', Gar'ner," was the answer. "I stuck by you when you was dismasted under Hatteras, and I stick by everything that I undertake. This is what I call Vineyard natur'; and I'm not about to discredit my native country."

"This is idle talk," returned Roswell, casting a severe glance at the men in the Vineyard boat, among whom a common smile arose, as if they highly approved of the reply of their own officer. "You very well know that Vineyard law cannot settle such a question, but American law. Were you man enough to take this whale from me, as I trust you are not, on our return home you could be, and would be, made to pay smartly for the act. Uncle Sam has a long arm, with which he sometimes reaches round the whole earth. Before you proceed any further in this matter, it may be well to remember that."

Daggett reflected; and it is probable that, as he cooled off from the excitement created by his late exertions, he fully recognized the justice of the other's remarks, and the injustice of his own claims. Still, it seemed to him un-American, un-Vineyard, if the reader please, to "give up;" and he clung to his error with as much pertinacity as if he had been right.

"If you are fast, I am fast, too. I'm not so certain of your law. When a man puts an iron into a whale, commonly it is his fish, if he can get him, and kill him. But there is a law above all whalers' law, and that is the law of Divine Providence. Providence has fastened us to this crittur', as if on purpose to give us a right in it; and I'm by no means so sure States' law won't uphold that doctrine. Then, I lost my own whale by means of this, and am entitled to some compensation for such a loss."

"You lost your own whale because he led round the head of mine, and not only drew his own iron, but came nigh causing me to cut. If any one is entitled to damage for such an act, it is I, who have been put to extra trouble in getting my fish."

"I do believe it was my lance that did

the job for the fellow! I darted, and you struck; in that way I got the start of you, and may claim to have made the crittur' spout the first blood. But, hearkee, Gar'ner—there's my hand—we've been friends so far, and I want to hold out friends. I will make you a proposal, therefore. Join stocks from this moment, and whale, and seal, and do all things else in common. When we make a final stowage for the return passage, we can make a final division, and each man take his share of the common adventure."

To do Roswell justice, he saw through the artifice of this proposition the instant it was uttered. It had the effect, notwithstanding, a good deal to mollify his feelings, since it induced him to believe that Daggett was maneuvering to get at his great secret, rather than to assail his rights.

"You are part owner of your schooner, Captain Daggett," our hero answered, "while I have no other interest in mine than my lay, as her master. You may have authority to make such a bargain, but I have none. It is my duty to fill the craft as fast and as full as I can, and carry her back safely to Deacon Pratt; but, I dare say, your Vineyard people will let you cruise about the earth at your pleasure, trusting to Providence for a profit. I cannot accept your offer."

"This is answering like a man, Gar'ner, and I like you all the better for it. Forty or fifty barrels of ile sha'n't break friendship between us. I helped you into port at Beaufort, and gave up the salvage; and now I'll help tow your whale alongside, and see you fairly through this business, too. Perhaps I shall have all the better luck for being a little generous."

There was prudence, as well as art, in this decision of Daggett's. Notwithstanding his ingenious pretensions to a claim in the whale, he knew perfectly well that no law would sustain it; and that, in addition to the chances of being beaten on the spot, which were at least equal, he would certainly be beaten in the courts at home, should he really attempt to carry out his declared design. Then, he really deferred to the expectation that his future good fortune might be influenced by his present forbearance. Superstition forms a material part of a sailor's nature, if indeed it do not that of every man engaged in hazardous and uncertain adventures. How far his hopes were justified in this last respect will appear in the contents of a communication that Deacon Pratt received from the master of his schooner, and to which we will now refer, as the clearest and briefest mode of continuing the narrative.

The *Sea Lion* left Oyster Pond late in September. It was the third day of March in the succeeding year that Mary was standing at the window, gazing with melancholy interest at that point in the adjacent waters where last she had seen, nearly six months before, the vessel of Roswell disappear behind the woods of the island that bears his family name. There had been a long easterly gale, but the weather had changed; the south wind blew softly, and all the indications of an early spring were visible. For the first time in three months, she had raised the sash of that window; and the air that entered was bland, and savored of the approaching season.

"I dare say, uncle"—the deacon was writing near a very low wood fire, which was scarcely more than embers—"I dare say, uncle," said the sweet voice of Mary, which was a little tremulous with feeling, "that the ocean is calm enough to-day. It is very silly in us to tremble, when there is a storm, for those who must now be so many, many thousand miles away. What is the distance between the antarctic seas and Oyster Pond, I wonder?"

"You ought to be able to calculate that yourself, gal, or what is the use to pay for your schooling?"

"I should not know how to set about it, uncle," returned the gentle Mary, "though I should be very glad to know."

"How many miles are there in a degree of latitude, child? You know that, I believe."

"More than sixty-nine, sir."

"Well, in what latitude is Oyster Pond?"

"I have heard Roswell say that we

were a little higher, as he calls it, than forty-one."

"Well, 41 times 69"—figuring as he spoke—"make 2,829; say we are 3,000 miles from the equator, the nearest way we can get there. Then the antarctic circle commences in 23° 30′ south, which deducted from 90 degrees, leave just 66° 30′ between the equator and the nearest spot within the sea you have mentioned. Now 66° 30′ give about 4,589 statute miles more, in a straight line, allowing only 69 to a degree. The two sums, added together, make 7,589 miles, or rather more. But the road is not straight by any means, as shipmasters tell me; and I suppose Gar'ner must have gone, at the very least, 8,000 miles to reach his latitude, to say nothing of a considerable distance of longitude to travel over, to the southward of Cape Horn."

"It is a terrible distance to have a friend from us!" ejaculated Mary, though in a low, dejected tone.

"It is a terrible distance for a man to trust his property away from him, gal; and I do not sleep a-nights for thinking of it, when I remember where my own schooner may be all this time!"

"Ah, here is Baiting Joe, and with a letter in his hand, uncle, I do declare!"

It might be a secret hope that impelled Mary, for away she bounded like a young fawn, running to meet the old fisherman at the door. No sooner did her eyes fall on the superscription, than the large package was pressed to her heart, and she seemed, for an instant, lost in thanksgiving. That no one might unnecessarily be a witness of what passed between her uncle and herself, Joe was directed to the kitchen, where a good meal, a glass of rum and water, and the quarter of a dollar that Mary gave him, as she showed the way, satisfied him with the results of his trouble.

"Here it is, uncle," cried the nearly breathless girl, re-entering the "keeping-room," and unconsciously holding the letter still pressed to her heart,—"a letter—a letter from Roswell, in his own precious hand."

A flood of tears gave some relief to feelings that had so long been pent, and eased a heart that had been compressed nearly to breaking. At any other time, and at this unequivocal evidence of the hold the young man had on the affections of his niece, Deacon Pratt would have remonstrated with her on the folly of refusing to become "Roswell Gar'ner's" wife; but the sight of the letter drove all other thoughts from his head, concentrating his whole being in the fate of the schooner.

"Look, and see if it has the antarctic post-mark on it, Mary," said the deacon, in a tremulous voice.

This request was not made so much in ignorance as in trepidation. The deacon very well knew that the islands the *Sea Lion* was to visit were uninhabited, and were destitute of post-offices; but his ideas were confused, and apprehension rendered him silly.

"Uncle," exclaimed the niece, wiping the tears from a face that was now rosy with blushes at her own weakness, "surely, Roswell can find no post-office where he is!"

"But the letter must have some post-mark, child. Baiting Joe has not brought it himself into the country."

"It is post-marked 'New York,' sir, and nothing else. Yes, here is 'Forwarded by Cane, Spriggs & Button, Rio de Janeiro.' It must have been put into a post-office there."

"Rio!—Here is more salvage, gal—more salvage coming to afflict me!"

"But you had no salvage to pay, uncle, on the other occasion; perhaps there will be none to pay on this. Had I not better open the letter at once, and see what has happened?"

"Yes, open it, child," answered the deacon, in a voice so feeble as to be scarcely audible—"open it at once, as you say, and let me know my fate. Anything is better than this torment!"

Mary did not wait for a second permission, but instantly broke the seal. It might have been the result of education, or there may be such a thing as female instinct in these matters; but certain it is, that the girl turned toward the window, as she tore the paper asunder, and

slipped the letter that bore her own name into a fold of her dress, so dexterously, that one far more keen-sighted than her uncle would not have detected the act. No sooner was her own letter thus secured, than the niece offered the principal epistle to her uncle.

"Read it yourself, Mary," said the last, in his querulous tones. "My eyes are so dim that I could not see to read it."

"'Rio de Janeiro, Province of Brazil, South America, Nov. 14th, 1819,'" commenced the niece.

"Rio de Janeiro!" interrupted the uncle. "Why, that is round Cape Horn, isn't it, Mary?"

"Certainly not, sir. Brazil is on the east side of the Andes, and Rio de Janeiro is its capital. The king of Portugal lives there now, and has lived there as long as I can remember."

"Yes, yes; I had forgotten. The Brazil Banks, where our whalers go, are in the Atlantic. But what can have taken Gar'ner into Rio, unless it be to spend more money!"

"By reading the letter, sir, we shall soon know. I see there is something about spermaceti oil here."

"Ile? And spalm ile, do you say!" exclaimed the deacon, brightening up at once—"Read on, Mary, my good gal—read the letter as fast as you can—read it at a trot."

"'Deacon Israel Pratt—Dear sir,'" continued Mary, in obedience to this command, "'the two schooners sailed from Beaufort, North Carolina, as stated already, per mail, in a letter written at that port, and which has doubtless come to hand. We had fine weather, and a tolerable run of it, until we reached the calm latitudes, where we were detained by the usual changes for about a week. On the 18th Oct. the pleasant cry of "there she spouts" was heard aboard here, and we found ourselves in the neighborhood of whales. Both schooners lowered their boats, and I was soon fast to a fine bull, who gave us a long tow before the lance was put into him, and he was made to spout blood. Captain Daggett set up some claims to this fish, in consequence of his line's getting foul of the creature's jaws, but he changed his mind in good season, and clapped on to help tow the whale down to the vessel. His irons drew from a young bull, and a good deal of dissatisfaction existed among the other crew, until, fortunately, the school of young bulls came round quite near us, when Captain Daggett and his people succeeded in securing no less than three of the fish, and Mr. Hazard got a very fine one for us.

"'I am happy to say that we had very pleasant weather to cut in, and secured every gallon of the oil of both our whales, as did Captain Daggett all of his. Our largest bull made one hundred and nineteen barrels, of which forty-three barrels was head-matter. I never saw better case and junk in a whale in my life. The smallest bull turned out well, too, making fifty-eight barrels, of which twenty-one was head. Daggett got one hundred and thirty-three barrels from his three fish, a very fair proportion of head, though not as large as our own. Having this oil on board, we came in here after a pleasant run; and I have shipped, as per invoice inclosed, one hundred and seventy-seven barrels of spermaceti oil, viz., sixty-four barrels of head, and rest in body-oil, to your order, care of Fish & Grinnell, New York, by the brig *Jason*, Captain Williams, who will sail for home about the 20th proximo, and to whom I trust this letter——'"

"Stop, Mary, my dear—this news is overpowering—it is almost too good to be true," interrupted the deacon, nearly as much unmanned by this intelligence of his good fortune as he had previously been by his apprehensions. "Yes, it does seem too good to be true; read it again, child; yes, read every syllable of it again!"

Mary complied, delighted enough to hear all she could of Roswell's success.

"Why, uncle," said the deeply-interested girl, "all this oil is spermaceti! It is worth a great deal more than so much of that which comes of the right whale."

"More! Ay, nearly as three for one. Hunt me up the last 'Spectator,' girl—hunt me up the last 'Spectator,' and let me see at once at what they quote spalm."

Mary soon found the journal, and handed it to her uncle.

"Yes, here it is, and quoted $1.12½ per gallon, as I live! That's nine shillings a gallon, Mary—just calculate on that bit of paper—thirty times one hundred and seventy-seven, Mary; how much is that, child?"

"I make it 5,310, uncle—yes, that is right. But what are the 30 times for, sir?"

"Gallons, gal, gallons. Each barrel has 30 gallons in it, if not more. There ought to be 32 by rights, but this is a cheating age. Now multiply 5,310 by 9, and see what that comes to."

"Just 47,790, sir, as near as I can get it."

"Yes, that's the shillings. Now divide 47,790 by 8, my dear. Be actyve, Mary, be actyve."

"It leaves 5,973, with a remainder of 6, sir. I believe I'm right."

"I dare say you are, child; yes, I dare say you are. This is the dollars. A body may call them $6,000, as the barrels will a little overrun the 30 gallons. My share of this will be two-thirds, and that will net the handsome sum of, say $4,000!"

The deacon rubbed his hands with delight, and having found his voice again, his niece was astonished at hearing him utter what he had to say, with a sort of glee that sounded in her ears as very unnatural, coming from him. So it was, however, and she dutifully endeavored not to think of it.

"Four thousand dollars, Mary, will quite cover the first cost of the schooner; that is, without including outfit and spare rigging, of which her master took about twice as much as was necessary. He's a capital fellow, is that young Gar'ner, and will make an excellent husband, as I've always told you, child. A little wasteful, perhaps, but an excellent youth at the bottom. I dare say he lost his spars off Cape Hatteras in trying to outsail that Daggett; but I overlook all that now. He's a capital youth to work upon a whale or a sea-elephant! There isn't his equal, as I'll engage, in all Ameriky, if you'll only let him know where to find the creatur's. I knew his character before I engaged him; for no man but a real skinner shall ever command a craft of mine."

"Roswell *is* a good fellow," answered Mary, with emphasis, the tears filling her eyes as she listened to these eulogiums of her uncle on the youth she loved with all of a woman's tenderness, at the very moment she scrupled to place her happiness on one whose "God was not her God." "No one knows him better than I, uncle, and no one respects him more. But had I not better read the rest of his letter? —there is a good deal more of it."

"Go on, child, go on—but read the part over again where he speaks of the quantity of the ile he has shipped to Fish & Grinnell."

Mary did as requested, when she proceeded to read aloud the rest of the communication.

"I have been much at a loss how to act in regard to Captain Daggett," said Roswell, in his letter. "He stood by me so manfully and generously off Cape Hatteras, that I did not like to part company in the night, or in a squall, which would have seemed ungrateful, as well as wearing a sort of runaway look. I am afraid he has some knowledge of the existence of our islands, though I doubt whether he has their latitude and longitude exactly. Something there is of this nature on board the other schooner, her people often dropping hints to my officers and men, when they have been gamming. I have sometimes fancied Daggett sticks so close to us, that he may get the advantage of our reckoning to help him to what he wants to find. He is no great navigator anywhere, running more by signs and currents, in my judgment, than by the use of his instruments. Still, he could find his way to any part of the world."

"Stop there, Mary; stop a little, and let me have time to consider. Isn't it awful, child?"

The niece changed color, and seemed really frightened, so catching was the deacon's distress, though she scarce knew what was the matter.

"What is awful, uncle?" at length she asked, anxious to know the worst.

"This covetousness in them Vineyarders! I consider it both awful and wicked. I must get the Rev. Mr. Whittle to preach against the sin of covetousness; it does gain so much ground in Ameriky! The whole Church should lift its voice against it, or it will shortly lift its voice against the Church. To think of them Daggetts fitting out a schooner to follow my craft about the 'arth in this unheard-of manner; just as if she was a pilot-boat, and young Gar'ner a pilot! I do hope the fellows will make a wrack of it, among the ice of the antarctic seas! That would be a fit punishment for their impudence and covetousness."

"I suppose, sir, they think that they have the same right to sail on the ocean that others have. Seals and whales are the gifts of God, and one person has no more right to them than another."

"You forget, Mary, that one man may have a secret that another doesn't know. In that case he ought not to go prying about like an old woman in a village neighborhood. Read on, child, read on, and let me know the worst at once."

"I shall sail to-morrow, having finished all my business here, and hope to be off Cape Horn in twenty days, if not sooner. In what manner I am to get rid of Daggett, I do not yet know. He outsails me a little on all tacks, unless it be in very heavy weather, when I have a trifling advantage over him. It will be in my power to quit him any dark night; but if I let him go ahead, and he should really have any right notions about the position of the islands, he might get there first, and make havoc among the seals."

"Awful, awful!" interrupted the deacon, again; "that would be the worst of all! I won't allow it; I forbid it—it shall not be!"

"Alas! uncle, poor Roswell is too far from us now to hear these words. No doubt the matter is long since decided, and he has acted according to the best of his judgment!"

"It is terrible to have one's property so far away! Government ought to have steamboats, or packets of some sort, running between New York and Cape Horn, to carry orders back and forth. But we shall never have things right, Mary, so long as the democrats are uppermost."

By this remark, which savors very strongly of a species of censure that is much in fashion in the coteries of that Great Emporium, which it is the taste and pleasure of its people to term a *commercial* emporium, especially among elderly ladies, the reader will at once perceive that the deacon was a federalist, which was somewhat of a novelty in Suffolk thirty years since. Had he lived down to our own times, the old man would probably have made all the gyrations in politics that have distinguished the school to which he would have belonged, and, without his own knowledge, most probably, would have been as near an example of perpetual motion as the world will ever see, through his devotion to what are now called "whig principles." We are no great politician, but time has given us the means of comparing; and we often smile when we hear the disciples of Hamilton, and of Adams, and of all that high-toned school, declaiming against the use of the veto, and talking of the "one man power," and of Congress leading the government! The deacon was very apt to throw the opprobrium of even a bad season on the administration, and the reader has seen what he thought of the subject of running packets between New York and Cape Horn.

"There ought to be a large navy, Mary—a monstrous navy, so that the vessels might be kept carrying letters about, and serving the public. But we shall never have things right until Rufus King, or some man like him, gets in. If Gar'ner lets that Daggett get the start of him, he never need come home again. The islands are as much mine as if I had bought them; and I'm not sure an action wouldn't lie for seals taken on them without my consent. Yes, yes; we want a monstrous navy to convoy sealers, and carry letters about, and keep some folks at home, while it lets other folks go about their lawful business."

"Of what islands are you speaking, uncle? Surely the sealing islands, where Roswell has gone, are public and uninhab-

ited, and no one has a better right there than another!"

The deacon perceived that he had gone too far in his tribulation, and began to have a faint notion that he was making a fool of himself. He asked his niece, in a very faint voice, therefore, to hand him the letter, the remainder of which he would endeavor to read himself. Although every word that Roswell Gardiner wrote was very precious to Mary, the gentle girl had a still unopened epistle to herself to peruse, and glad enough was she to make the exchange. Handing the deacon his letter, therefore, she withdrew at once to her private room, in order to read her own.

"Dearest Mary," said Roswell Gardiner, in this epistle, "your uncle will tell you what has brought us into this port, and all things connected with the schooner. I have sent home more than $4,000 worth of oil, and I hope my owner will forgive the accident off Currituck, on account of this run of good luck. In my opinion, we shall yet make a voyage, and that part of my fortune will be secure. Would that I could feel as sure of finding you more disposed to be kind to me on my return! I read in your Bible every day, Mary, and I often pray to God to enlighten my mind, if my views have been wrong. As yet, I cannot flatter myself with any change, for my old opinions appear rather to be more firmly rooted than they were before I sailed." Here poor Mary heaved a heavy sigh, and wiped the tears from her eyes. She was pained to a degree she could hardly believe possible, though she did full credit to Roswell's frankness. Like all devout persons, her faith in the efficacy of sacred writ was strong; and she so much the more lamented her suitor's continued blindness, because it remained after light had shone upon it. "Still, Mary," the letter added, "as I have every human inducement to endeavor to be right, I shall not throw aside the book, by any means. In that I fully believe; our difference being in what the volume teaches. Pray for me, sweetest girl—but I know you do, and will continue to do, as long as I am absent."

"Yes, indeed, Roswell," murmured Mary—"as long as you and I live!"

"Next to this one great concern of my life, comes that which this man Daggett gives me," the letter went on to say. "I hardly know what to do under all the circumstances. Keep in his company much longer I cannot, without violating my duty to the deacon. Yet it is not easy, in any sense, to get rid of him. He has stood by me so manfully on all occasions, and seems so much disposed to make good-fellowship of the voyage, that, did it depend on myself only, I should at once make a bargain with him to seal in company and to divide the spoils. But this is now impossible, and I must quit him in some way or other. He outsails me in most weathers, and it is a thing easier said than done. What will make it more difficult is the growing shortness of the nights. The days lengthen fast now, and as we go south they will become so much longer that, by the time when it will be indispensable to separate, it will be nearly all day. The thing must be done, however, and I trust to luck to be able to do it as it ought to be effected.

"And now, dearest, dearest Mary——" But why should we lift the veil from the feelings of this young man, who concluded his letter by pouring out his whole heart in a few sincere and manly sentences. Mary wept over them most of that day, perusing and reperusing them, until her eyes would scarce perform their proper office.

A few days later the deacon was made a very happy man by the receipt of a letter from Fish and Grinnell, notifying him of the arrival of his oil, accompanied by a most gratifying account of the state of the market, and asking for instructions. The oil was disposed of, and the deacon pocketed his portion of the proceeds as soon as possible; eagerly looking for a new and profitable investment for the avails. Great was the reputation Roswell Gardiner made by this capture of the two spermaceti whales, and by sending the proceeds to so good a market. In commerce, as in war, success is all in all, though in both success is nearly as often

the result of unforeseen circumstances as of calculation and wisdom. It is true, there is a sort of trade, and a sort of war, in which prudence and care may effect a great deal, yet are both often outstripped by the random exertions and adventures of those who calculate almost as wildly as they act. Audacity, as the French term it, is a great quality in war, and often achieves more than the most calculated wisdom—nay, it becomes wisdom in that sort of struggle; and we are far from being sure that audacity is not sometimes as potent in trade. At all events, it was esteemed a bold, as well as a prosperous exploit, for a little schooner like the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond to take a hundred-barrel whale, and to send home its "ile," as the deacon always pronounced the word, in common with most others in old Suffolk.

Long and anxious months, with one exception, succeeded this bright spot of sunshine in Mary Pratt's solicitude in behalf of the absent Roswell. She knew there was but little chance of hearing from him until he returned north. The exception was a short letter that the deacon received, dated two weeks later than that written from Rio, in latitude forty-one, or just as far south of the equator as Oyster Pond was north of it, and nearly fourteen hundred miles to the southward of Rio. This letter was written in great haste, to send home by a Pacific trader who was accidentally met nearer the coast than was usual for such vessels to be. It stated that all was well; that the schooner of Daggett was still in company; and that Gardiner intended to get "shut" of her, as the deacon expressed it, on the very first occasion.

After the receipt of this letter, the third written by Roswell Gardiner since he left home, a long and blank interval of silence succeeded. Then it was that months passed away in an anxious and dark uncertainty. Spring followed winter, summer succeeded to spring, and autumn came to reap the fruits of all the previous seasons, without bringing any further tidings of the adventurers. Then winter made its second appearance since the *Sea Lion* had sailed, filling the minds of the mariner's friends with sad forebodings as they listened to the moanings of the gales that accompanied that bleak and stormy quarter of the year. Deep and painful were the anticipations of the deacon, in whom failing health and a near approach to the "last of earth," came to increase the gloom. As for Mary, youth and health sustained her; but her very soul was heavy, as she pondered on so long and uncertain an absence.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Safely in harbor
Is the king's ship; in the deep nook, where once
Thou calledst me up at midnight to fetch dew
From the still vex'd Bermoothes, there she's hid."
—TEMPEST.

THE letter of Roswell Gardiner last received bore the date of December 10th, 1819, or just a fortnight after he had sailed from Rio de Janeiro. We shall next present the schooner of Deacon Pratt to the reader on the 18th of that month, or three weeks and one day after she had sailed from the capital of Brazil. Early in the morning of the day last mentioned, the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond was visible standing to the northward, with the wind light, but freshening, from the westward, and in smooth water. Land was not only in sight, but was quite near, less than a league distant. Toward this land the head of the schooner had been laid, and she was approaching it at the rate of some four or five knots. The land was broken, high, of a most sterile aspect, where it was actually to be seen, and nearly all covered with a light but melting snow, though the season was advanced to the middle of the first month in summer. The weather was not very cold, however, and there was a feeling about it that promised it would become still milder. The aspect of the neighboring land, so barren, rugged, and inhospitable, chilled the feeling, and gave to the scene a somber hue, which the weather itself might not have imparted. Directly ahead of the schooner rose a sort of pyr-

amid of broken rocks, which, occupying a small island, stood isolated in a measure, and some distance in advance of other and equally rugged ranges of mountains, which belonged also to islands detached from the mainland thousands of years before, under some violent convulsions of nature.

It was quite apparent that all on board the schooner regarded that ragged pyramid with lively interest. Most of the crew were collected on the forecastle, including the officers, and all eyes were fastened on the ragged pyramid which they were diagonally approaching. The principal spokesman was Stimson, the oldest mariner on board, and one who had oftener visited those seas than any other of the crew.

"You know the spot, do you, Stephen?" demanded Roswell Gardiner, with interest.

"Yes, sir, there's no mistake. That's the Horn. Eleven times have I doubled it, and this is the third time that I've been so close in as to get a fair sight of it. Once I went inside, as I've told you, sir."

"I have doubled it six times myself," said Gardiner, "but never saw it before. Most navigators give it a wide berth. 'Tis said to be the stormiest spot on the known earth!"

"That's a mistake, you may depend on't, sir. The sow-westers blow great guns hereabouts, it is true enough; and when they do, sich a sea comes tumbling in on that rock as man never seed anywhere else, perhaps; but, on the whull, I'd rather be close in here, than two hundred miles further to the southward. With the wind at sow-west and heavy, a better slant might be made from the southern position; but here I know where I am, and I'd go in and anchor, and wait for the gale to blow itself out."

"Talking of seas, Captain Gar'ner," observed Hazard, "don't you think, sir, we begin to feel the swell of the Pacific? Smooth as the surface of the water is, here is a ground-swell rolling in that must be twelve or fifteen feet in height."

"There's no doubt of that. We have felt the swell of the Pacific these two hours; no man can mistake *that*. The Atlantic has no such waves. This is an ocean in reality, and this is its stormiest part. The wind freshens and hauls, and I'm afraid we are about to be caught close in here with a regular sow-west gale."

"Let it come, sir, let it come," put in Stimson, again; "if it does, we've only to run in and anchor. I can stand pilot, and I promise to carry the schooner where twenty sow-westers will do her no harm. What I've seen done once, I know can be done again. The time will come when the Horn will be a reg'lar harbor."

Roswell left the forecastle and walked aft, pondering on what had just been said. His situation was delicate, and demanded decision as well as prudence. The manner in which Daggett had stuck by him ever since the two vessels took their departure from Block Island is known to the reader. The *Sea Lions* had sailed from Rio in company, and they had actually made Staten Land together, the day preceding that on which we now bring the Oyster Pond craft once more upon the scene, and had closed so near as to admit of a conversation between the two masters.

It would seem that Daggett was exceedingly averse to passing through the Straits of Le Maire. An uncle of his had been wrecked there, and had reported the passage as the most dangerous one he had ever encountered. It has its difficulties, no doubt, in certain states of the wind and tide; but Roswell had received good accounts of the place from Stimson, who had been through several times. The wind was rather scant to go through, and the weather threatened to be thick. As Daggett urged his reasons for keeping off and passing outside of Staten Land, a circuit of considerable extent, besides bringing a vessel far to leeward with the prevalent winds of that region, which usually blow from northwest round to southwest, Roswell was reflecting on the opportunity the circumstances afforded of giving his consort the slip. After discussing the matter for some time, he desired Daggett to lead on and he would follow. This was done, though neither schooner was kept off until Roswell got a good

view of Cape St. Diego, on Tierra del Fuego, thereby enabling him to judge of the positions of the principal landmarks. Without committing himself by any promise, therefore, he told Daggett to lead on, and for some time he followed, the course being one that did not take him much out of the way. The weather was misty, and at times the wind blew in squalls. The last increased as the schooners drew nearer to Staten Land. Daggett, being about half a mile ahead, felt the full power of one particular squall that came out of the ravines with greater force than common, and he kept away to increase his distance from the land. At the same time, the mist shut in the vessels from each other. It was also past sunset, and a dark and dreary night was approaching. This latter fact had been one of Daggett's arguments for going outside.

Profiting by all these circumstances, Roswell tacked, and stood over toward Tierra del Fuego. He knew from the smoothness of the water that an ebb-tide was running, and trusted to its force to carry him through the straits. He saw no more of the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard. She continued shut in by the mist until night closed around both vessels. When he got about mid-channel, Roswell tacked again. By this time the current had sucked him fairly into the passage, and no sooner did he go about than his movement to the southward was very rapid. The squalls gave some trouble, but on the whole, he did very well. Next morning he was off Cape Horn, as described. By this expression, it is generally understood that a vessel is somewhere near the longitude of that world-renowned cape, but not necessarily in sight of it. Few navigators actually see the extremity of the American continent, though they double the cape, it being usually deemed the safest to pass well to the southward. Such was Daggett's position; who, in consequence of having gone outside of Staten Land, was now necessarily a long distance to leeward, and who could not hope to beat up abreast of the Hermits, even did the wind and sea favor him, in less than twenty-four hours. A great advantage was obtained by coming through the Straits of Le Maire, and Roswell felt very certain that he should not see his late consort again that day, even did he heave-to for him. But our hero had no idea of doing anything of the sort. Having shaken off his leech, he had no wish to suffer it to fasten to him again. It was solely with the intention of making sure of this object that he thought of making a harbor.

In order that the reader may better understand those incidents of our narrative which we are about to relate, it may be well to say a word of the geographical features of the region to which he has been transported, in fiction, if not in fact. At the southern extremity of the American continent is a cluster of islands, which are dark, sterile, rocky, and most of the year covered with snow. Evergreens relieve the aspect of sterility, in places that are a little sheltered, and there is a meager vegetation, in spots, that serves to sustain animal life. The first strait which separates this cluster of islands from the main, is that of Magellan, through which vessels occasionally pass, in preference to going farther south. Then comes Tierra del Fuego, which is much the largest of all the islands. To the southward of Tierra del Fuego lies a cluster of small islands, which bear different names; though the group farthest south of all, and which it is usual to consider as the southern termination of our noble continent, but which is not on a continent at all, is known by the appropriate appellation of the Hermits. If solitude, and desolation, and want, and a contemplation of some of the sublimest features of this earth, can render a spot fit for a hermitage, these islands are very judiciously named. The one that is farthest south contains the cape itself, which is marked by the ragged pyramid of rock already mentioned; placed there by nature, a never-tiring sentinel of the war of the elements.

Behind this cluster of the Hermits it was that Stimson advised his officer to take refuge against the approaching gale, of which the signs were now becoming ob-

vious and certain. Roswell's motive, however, for listening to such advice, was less to find a shelter for his schooner than to get rid of Daggett. For the gale he cared but little, since he was a long way from the ice, and could stretch off the land to the southward into a waste of waters that seems interminable. There are islands to the southward of Cape Horn, and a good many of them too, though none very near. It is now known, also, by means of the toils and courage of various seamen, including those of the persevering and laborious Wilkes, ever the most industrious and the least rewarded of all the navigators who have ever worked for the human race in this dangerous and exhausting occupation, that a continent is there also; but, at the period of which we are writing, the existence of the Shetlands and Palmer's Land was the extent of the later discoveries in that part of the ocean. After pacing the quarter-deck a few minutes, when he quitted the forecastle as mentioned, Roswell Gardiner again went forward among the men.

"You are quite sure that this high peak is the Horn, Stimson?" he observed, inquiringly.

"Sartin of it, sir. There's no mistaking sich a place, which, once seen, is never forgotten."

"It agrees with the charts and our reckoning, and I may say it agrees with our eyes also. Here is the Pacific Ocean plain enough, Mr. Hazard."

"So I think, sir. We are at the end of Ameriky, if it *has* an end anywhere. This heavy long swell is an old acquaintance, though I never was in close enough to see the land, hereabouts, before."

"It is fortunate we have one trusty hand on board who can stand pilot. Stimson, I intend to go in and anchor, and I shall trust to you to carry me into a snug berth."

"I'll do it, Captain Gar'ner, if the weather will permit it," returned the seaman, with an unpretending sort of confidence that spoke well for his ability.

Preparations were now commenced in earnest to come to. It was time that some steady course should be adopted, as the wind was getting up, and the schooner was rapidly approaching the land. In half an hour the *Sea Lion* was bending to a little gale, with her canvas reduced to close-reefed mainsail and foresail, and the bonnet off her jib. The sea was fast getting up, though it came in long, and mountain-like. Roswell dreaded the mist. Could he pass through the narrow channels that Stimson had described to him, with a clear sky, one half of his causes of anxiety would be removed. But the wind was not a clear one, and he felt that no time was to be lost.

It required great nerve to approach a coast like that of Cape Horn in such weather. As the schooner got nearer to the real cape, the sight of the seas tumbling in and breaking on its ragged rock, and the hollow roaring sound they made, actually became terrific. To add to the awe inspired in the breast of even the most callous-minded man on board, came a doubt whether the schooner could weather a certain point of rock, the western extremity of the island, after she had got so far into a bight as to render wearing questionable, if not impossible. Every one now looked grave and anxious. Should the schooner go ashore in such a place, a single minute would suffice to break her to pieces, and not a soul could expect to be saved. Roswell was exceedingly anxious, though he remained cool.

"The tides and eddies about these rocks, and in so high a latitude, sweep a vessel like chips," he said to his chief mate. "We have been set in here by an eddy, and a terrible place it is."

"All depends on our gear's holding on, sir," was the answer, "with a little on Providence. Just watch the point ahead, Captain Gar'ner; though we are not actually to leeward of it, see with what a drift we have drawn upon it! The manner in which these seas roll in from the sow-west is terrific! No craft can go to windward against them."

This remark of Hazard's was very just. The seas that came down upon the cape resembled a rolling prairie in their outline. A single wave would extend a quarter of a mile from trough to trough, and

as it passed beneath the schooner, lifting her high in the air, it really seemed as if the glancing water would sweep her away in its force. But human art had found the means to counteract even this imposing display of the power of nature. The little schooner rode over the billows like a duck, and when she sank between two of them, it was merely to rise again on a new summit, and breast the gale gallantly. It was the current that menaced the greatest danger; for that, unseen except in its fruits, was clearly setting the little craft to leeward, and bodily toward the rocks. By this time our adventurers were so near to the land that they almost gave up hope itself. Cape Hatteras, and its much-talked-of danger, seemed a place of refuge compared to that in which our navigators now found themselves. Could the deepest bellowings of ten thousand bulls be united in a common roar, the noise would not have equaled that of the hollow sound which issued from a sea as it went into some cavern of the rocks. Then, the spray filled the air like driving rain, and there were minutes when the cape, though so frightfully near, was hid from view by the vapor.

At this precise moment, the *Sea Lion* was less than a quarter of a mile to windward of the point she was struggling to weather, and toward which she was driving under a treble impetus; that of the wind, acting on her sails, and pressing her ahead at the rate of fully five knots, for the craft was kept a rap full; that of the eddy, or current, and that of the rolling waters. No man spoke, for each person felt that the crisis was one in which silence was a sort of homage to the Deity. Some prayed privately, and all gazed on the low rocky point that it was indispensable to pass, to avoid destruction. There was one favorite circumstance; the water was known to be deep, quite close to the iron-bound coast, and it was seldom that any danger existed that it was not visible to the eye. This Roswell knew from Stimson's accounts, as well as from those of other mariners, and he saw that the fact was of the last importance to him. Should he be able to weather the point ahead, that which terminated at the mouth of the passage that led within the Hermits, it was now certain it could be done only by going fearfully near the rocks.

Roswell Gardiner took his station between the knight-heads, beckoning to Stimson to come near him. At the same time, Hazard himself went to the helm.

"Do you remember this place?" asked the young master of the old seaman.

"This is the spot, sir; and if we can round the rocky point ahead, I will take you to a safe anchorage. Our drift is awful, and we are in an eddy tide here, sir!"

"It is the eddy," answered Roswell, calmly, "though our drift is not trifling. This is getting frightfully near to that point!"

"Hold on, sir—it's our only chance;—hold on, and we may rub and go."

"If we *rub*, we are lost; that is certain enough. Should we get by *this* first point, there is another a short distance beyond it, which must certainly fetch us up, I fear. See—it opens more, as we draw ahead."

Stimson saw the new danger, and fully appreciated it. He did not speak, however; for, to own the truth, he now abandoned all hope, and, being a piously-inclined person, he was privately addressing himself to God. Every man on board was fully aware of the character of this new danger, and all seemed to forget that of the nearest point of rock, toward which they were now wading with portentous speed. That point *might* be passed; there was a little hope there; but as to the point a quarter of a mile beyond, with the leeward set of the schooner, the most ignorant hand on board saw how unlikely it was that they should get by it.

An imposing silence prevailed in the schooner, as she came abreast of the first rock. It was about fifty fathoms under the lee bow, and, as to *that* spot, all depended on the distance outward that the dangers thrust themselves. This it was impossible to see amid the chaos of waters produced by the collision between the waves and the land. Roswell fastened

his eyes on objects ahead, to note the rate of his leeward set, and, with a seaman's quickness, he noted the first change.

"She feels the under-tow, Stephen," he said, in a voice so compressed as to seem to come out of the depths of his chest, "and is breasted up to windward!"

"What means that sudden luff, sir? Mr. Hazard must keep a good full, or we shall have no chance."

Gardiner looked aft, and saw that the mate was bearing the helm well up, as if he met with much resistance. The truth then flashed upon him, and he shouted out—

"All's well, boys! God be praised, we have caught the ebb-tide, under our lee bow!"

These few words explained the reason of the change. Instead of setting to leeward, the schooner was now meeting a powerful tide of some four or five knots, which hawsed her up to windward with irresistible force. As if conscious of the danger she was in, the tight little craft receded from the rocks as she shot ahead, and rounded the second point, which, a minute before, had appeared to be placed there purposely to destroy her. It was handsomely doubled, at the safe distance of a hundred fathoms. Roswell believed he might now beat his schooner off the land far enough to double the cape altogether, could he but keep her in that current. It doubtless expended itself, however, a short distance in the offing, as its waters diffused themselves on the breast of the ocean; and it was this diffusion of the element that produced the eddy which had proved so nearly fatal.

In ten minutes after striking the tide, the schooner opened the passage fairly, and was kept away to enter it. Notwithstanding it blew so heavily, the rate of sailing, by the land, did not exceed five knots. This was owing to the great strength of the tide, which sometimes rises and falls thirty feet, in high latitudes and narrow waters. Stimson now showed he was a man to be relied on. Conning the craft intelligently, he took her in behind the island on which the cape stands, luffed her up into a tiny cove, and made a cast of the lead. There were fifty fathoms of water, with a bottom of mud. With the certainty that there was enough of the element to keep him clear of the ground at low water, and that his anchors would hold, Roswell made a flying moor, and veered out enough cable to render his vessel secure.

Here, then, was the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, that craft which the reader had seen lying at Deacon Pratt's wharf, only three short months before, safely anchored in a nook of the rocks behind Cape Horn. No navigator but a sealer would have dreamed of carrying his vessel into such a place, but it is a part of their calling to poke about in channels and passages where no one else has ever been. It was in this way that Stimson had learned to know where to find his present anchorage. The berth of the schooner was perfectly snug, and entirely land-locked. The tremendous swell that was rolling in on the outside, caused the waters to rise and fall a little within the passage, but there was no strain upon the cables in consequence. Neither did the rapid tides affect the craft, which lay in an eddy that merely kept her steady. The gale came howling over the Hermits, but was so much broken by the rocks as to do little more than whistle through the cordage and spars aloft.

Three days, and as many nights, did the gale from the south-west continue. The fourth day there was a change, the wind coming from the eastward. Roswell would now have gone out, had it not been for the apprehension of falling in with Daggett again. Having at length gotten rid of that pertinacious companion, it would have been an act of great weakness to throw himself blindly in his way once more. It was possible that Daggett might not suppose he had been left intentionally; in which case he would be very apt to look for his lost consort in the vicinity of the cape. As for the gale, it might, or it might not, have blown him to leeward. A good deal would depend on the currents and his distance to the southward. Near the land, Gardiner believed the currents favored a vessel doubling it, going west;

and if Daggett was also aware of this fact, it might induce him to keep as near the spot as possible.

Time was very precious to our sealers, the season being so short in the high latitudes. Still, they were a little in advance of their calculations, having got off the Horn fully ten days sooner than they had hoped to be there. Nearly the whole summer was before them, and there was the possibility of their even being too soon for the loosening of the ice farther south. The wind was the strongest inducement to go out, for the point to which our adventurers were bound lay a considerable distance to the westward, and fair breezes were not to be neglected. Under all the circumstanccs, however, it was decided to remain within the passage one day longer, and this so much the more, because Hazard had discovered some signs of sea-elephants frequenting an island at no great distance. The boats were lowered accordingly, and the mate went in one direction, while the master pulled up to the rocks, and landed on the Hermit, or the island which should bear that name *par excellence*, being that in which the group terminates.

Taking Stimson with him, to carry a glass, and armed with an old lance as a pike-pole, to aid his efforts, Roswell Gardiner now commenced the ascent of the pyramid already mentioned. It was ragged, and offered a thousand obstacles, but none that vigor and resolution could not overcome. After a few minutes of violent exertion, and by helping each other in difficult places, both Roswell and Stimson succeeded in placing themselves on the summit of the elevation, which was an irregular peak. The height was considerable, and gave an extended view of the adjacent islands, as well as of the gloomy and menacing ocean to the southward. The earth, probably, does not contain a more remarkable sentinel than this pyramid on which our hero had now taken his station. There it stood, actually the Ultima Thule of this vast continent, or, what was much the same, so closely united to it as to seem a part of our own moiety of the globe, looking out on the broad expanse of waters. The eye saw, to the right, the Pacific; in front was the Southern, or Antarctic Ocean; and to the left was the great Atlantic. For several minutes, both Roswell and Stephen sat mute, gazing on this grand spectacle.

By turning their faces north, they beheld the highlands of Tierra del Fuego, of which many of the highest peaks were covered with snow. The pyramid on which they were, however, was no longer white with the congealed rain, but stood, stern and imposing, in its native brown. The outlines of all the rocks, and the shores of the different islands, had an appearance of volcanic origin, though the rocks themselves told a somewhat different story. The last were principally of trap formation. Cape pigeons, gulls, petrels, and albatross were wheeling about in the air, while the rollers that still came in on this noble sea-wall were really terrific. Distant thunder wants the hollow, bellowing sound that these waves made when brought in contact with the shores. Roswell fancied that it was like a groan of the mighty Pacific, at finding its progress suddenly checked. The spray continued to fly, and, much of the time, the air below his elevated seat was filled with vapor.

As soon as our young master had taken in the grandest features of this magnificent view, his eyes sought the *Sea Lion* of Martha's Vineyard. There she was, sure enough, at a distance of only a couple of leagues, and apparantly standing directly for the Cape. Could it be possible that Daggett suspected his maneuver, and was coming in search of him, at the precise spot in which he had taken shelter? As respects the vessel, there was no question as to her character. From the elevation at which he was placed, Roswell, aided by the glass, had no difficulty in making her out, and in recognizing her rig, form, and character. Stimson also examined her, and knew her to be the schooner. On that vast and desolate sea she resembled a speck, but the art of man had enabled those she held to guide her safely through the tempest, and bring her up to her goal, in a time that really seemed miraculous for the circumstances.

"If we had thought of it, Captain Gar'ner," said Stephen, "we might have brought up an ensign, and set it on these rocks, by way of letting the Vineyarders know where we are to be found. But we can always go out and meet them, should this wind stand."

"Which is just what I have no intention of doing, Stephen. I came in here on purpose to get rid of that schooner."

"You surprise me, sir! A consort is no bad thing, when a craft is a-sealin' in a high latitude. The ice makes such ticklish times, that, for me, I'm always glad to know there is such a chance for taking a fellow off, should there happen to be a wrack."

"All that is very true, but there are reasons which may tell against it. I have heard of some islands where seals abound, and a consort is not quite so necessary to take them, as when one is wrecked."

"That alters the case, Captain Gar'ner. Nobody is obliged to tell of his sealing station. I was aboard one of the very first craft that found out that the South Shetlands was a famous place for seals, and no one among us thought it necessary to tell it to the world. Some men are weak enough to put sich discoveries in the newspapers; but, for my part, I think it quite enough to put them into the log."

"That schooner must have the current with her, she comes down so fast. She'll be abreast of the Horn in half an hour longer, Stephen. We will wait, and see what she would be at."

Gardiner's prediction was true. In half an hour the *Sea Lion* of Holmes's Hole glided past the rocky pyramid of the Horn, distant from it less than a mile. Had it been the object of her commander to pass into the Pacific, he might have done so with great apparent ease. Even with a southwest wind, that which blows fully half the time in those seas, it would have been in his power to lay past the islands, and soon get before it. A northeast course, with a little offing, will clear the islands, and when a vessel gets as far north as the mainland, it would take her off the coast.

But Daggett had no intention of doing anything of the sort. He was looking for his consort, which he had hoped to find somewhere near the cape. Disappointed in this expectation, after standing far enough west to make certain nothing was in sight in that quarter, he hauled up on an easy bowline, and stood to the southward. Roswell was right glad to see this, inasmuch as it denoted ignorance of the position of the islands he sought. They lay much farther to the westward; and no sooner was he sure of the course steered by the other schooner, than he hastened down to the boat, in order to get his own vessel under way, to profit by the breeze.

Two hours later the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond glanced through the passage which led into the ocean, on an ebb-tide. By that time, the other vessel had disappeared in the southern board; and Gardiner came out upon the open waters again, boldly, and certain of his course. All sail was set, and the little craft slipped away from the land with the ease of an aquatic bird that is plying its web-feet. Studding-sails were set, and the pyramid of the Horn soon began to lower in the distance, as the schooner receded. When night closed over the rolling waters, it was no longer visible, the vessel having fairly entered the Antarctic Ocean, if anything north of the circle can properly so be termed.

CHAPTER XIV.

"All gone! 'tis ours the goodly land——
Look round—the heritage behold!
Go forth—upon the mountain stand;
Then, if you can, be cold."—SPRAGUE.

IT was an enterprising and manly thing for a little vessel like the *Sea Lion* to steer with an undeviating course into the mysterious depths of the antarctic circle—mysterious, far more in that day, than at the present hour. But the American sealer rarely hesitates. He has very little science, few charts, and those oftener old than new, knows little of what is going on among the savans of the earth, though his ear is ever open to the lore of men like himself, and he has his mind stored with

pictures of islands and continents that would seem to have been formed for no other purpose than to meet the wants of the race of animals it is his business to pursue and to capture. Cape Horn and its vicinity have so long been frequented by this class of men, that they are at home among their islands, rocks, currents, and sterility; but to the southward of the Horn itself, all seemed a waste. At the time of which we are writing, much less was known of the antarctic regions than is known to-day; and even now our knowledge is limited to a few dreary outlines, in which barrenness and ice compete for the mastery. Wilkes, and his competitors, have told us that a vast frozen continent exists in that quarter of the globe; but even their daring and perseverence have not been able to determine more than the general fact.

We should be giving an exaggerated and false idea of Roswell Gardiner's character, did we say that he steered into that great void of the southern ocean in a total indifference to his destination and objects. Very much the reverse was his state of mind, as he saw the highland of the cape sink, as it might be foot by foot, into the ocean, and then lost sight of it altogether. Although the weather was fine for the region, it was dark and menacing. Such, indeed, is usually the case in that portion of this globe, which appears to be the favorite region of the storms. Although the wind was no more than a good breeze, and the ocean was but little disturbed, there were those symptoms in the atmosphere and in the long ground-swells that came rolling in from the southwest, that taught the mariner the cold lessons of caution. We believe that heavier gales of wind at sea are encountered in the warm than in the cold months; but there is something so genial in the air of the ocean during summer, and something so chilling and repulsive in the rival season, that most of us fancy that the currents of air correspond in strength with the fall of the mercury. Roswell knew better than this, it is true; but he also fully understood where he was, and what he was about. As a sealer, he had several times penetrated as far south as the Ne Plus Ultra of Cook; but it had ever before been in subordinate situations. This was the first time in which he had had the responsibility of command thrown on himself, and it was no more than natural that he should feel the weight of this new burden. So long as the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard was in sight, she had presented a center of interest and concern. To get rid of her had been his first care, and almost absorbing object; but, now that she seemed to be finally thrown out of his wake, there remained the momentous and closely approaching difficulties of the main adventure directly before his eyes. Roswell, therefore, was thoughtful and grave, his countenance offering no bad reflection of the sober features of the atmosphere and the ocean.

Although the season was that of summer, and the weather was such as is deemed propitious in the neighborhood of Cape Horn, a feeling of uncertainty prevailed over every other sensation. To the southward a cold mistiness veiled the view, and every mile the schooner advanced appeared like penetrating deeper and deeper into regions that Nature had hitherto withheld from the investigation of the mariner. Ice, and its dangers, were known to exist a few degrees farther in that direction; but islands also had been discovered, and turned to good account by the enterprise of the sealers.

It was truly a great thing for the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond to have thrown off her namesake of the Vineyard. It is true both vessels were still in the same sea, with a possibility of again meeting; but Roswell Gardiner was steering onward toward a haven designated in degrees and minutes, while the other craft was most probably left to wander in uncertainty in that remote and stormy ocean. Our hero thought there was now very little likelihood of his again falling in with his late consort, and this so much the more, because the islands he sought were not laid down in the vicinity of any other known land, and were consequently out of the usual track of the sealers. This last circumstance was fully appreciated by our

young navigator, and gave him confidence of possessing its treasures to himself, could he only find the place where Nature had hid them.

When the sun went down in that vast waste of water which lies to the southward of this continent, the little *Sea Lion* had fairly lost sight of land, and was riding over the long southwestern groundswell like a gull that holds its way steadily toward its nest. For many hours her course had not varied half a point, being as near as possible to south-southwest, which kept her a little off the wind. No sooner, however, did night come to shut in the view, than Roswell Gardiner went aft to the man at the helm, and ordered him to steer to the southward, as near as the breeze would conveniently allow. This was a material change in the direction of the vessel, and, should the present breeze stand, would probably place her, by the return of light, a good distance to the eastward of the point she would otherwise have reached. Hitherto it had been Roswell's aim to drop his consort; but, now it was dark, and so much time had already passed and been improved since the other schooner was last seen, he believed he might venture to steer in the precise direction he desired to go. The season is so short in those seas that every hour is precious, and no more variation from a real object could be permitted than circumstances imperiously required. It was now generally understood that the craft was making the best of her way toward her destined sealing-ground.

Independently of the discoveries of the regular explorers, a great deal of information has been obtained from the sealers themselves, within the present century, touching the antarctic seas. It is thought that many a headland, and various islands, that have contributed their shares in procuring the *accolades* for different European navigators, were known to the adventurers from Stonington and other by-ports of this country, long before science ever laid its eyes upon them, or monarchs their swords on the shoulders of their secondary discoverers.

That divers islands existed in this quarter of the ocean was a fact recognized in geography long before the *Sea Lion* was thought of; probably before her young master was actually born; but the knowledge generally possessed on the subject was meager and unsatisfactory. In particular cases, nevertheless, this remark would not apply, there being at that moment on board our little schooner several mariners, who had often visited the South Shetlands, New Georgia, Palmer's Land, and other known places in those seas. Not one of them all, however, had ever heard of any island directly south of the present position of the schooner.

No material change occurred during the night, or in the course of the succeeding day, the little *Sea Lion* industriously holding her way toward the south pole; making very regularly her six knots each hour. By the time she was thirty-six hours from the Horn, Gardiner believed himself to be fully three degrees to the southward of it, and consequently some distance within the parallel of sixty degrees south. Palmer's Land, with its neighboring islands, would have been near, had not the original course carried the schooner so far to the westward. As it was, no one could say what lay before them.

The third day out the wind hauled, and it blew heavily from the northeast. This gave the adventurers a great run. The blink of ice was shortly seen, and soon after ice itself, drifting about in bergs. The floating hills were grand objects to the eye, rolling and wallowing in the seas; but they were much worn and melted by the wash of the ocean, and comparatively of greatly diminished size. It was now absolutely necessary to lose most of the hours of darkness, it being much too dangerous to run in the night. The great barrier of ice was known to be close at hand; and Cook's "Ne Plus Ultra," at that time the great boundary of antarctic navigation, was near the parallel of latitude to which the schooner had reached. The weather, however, continued very favorable, and after the blow from the northeast the wind came from the south, chill, and attended with flurries of snow, but sufficiently steady and not so fresh as

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were ... the ice in long mountainous walls, resembling many of the ridges of the Alps, though moving heavily under the heaving and setting of the restless waters. Dense fogs from time to time clouded the whole view, and the schooner was compelled more than once that day to heave-to, in order to avoid running on the sunken masses of ice, or fields, of which many of vast size now began to make their appearance.

Notwithstanding the dangers that surrounded our adventurers, they were none of them so insensible to the sublime powers of Nature as to withhold their admiration from the many glorious objects which that lone and wild scene presented. The icebergs were of all the hues of the rainbow, as the sunlight gilded their summits or sides, or they were left shaded by the interposition of dark and murky clouds. There were instances when certain of the huge frozen masses even appeared to be quite black, in particular positions and under peculiar lights, while others at the same instant were gorgeous in their gleams of emerald and gold!

The aquatic birds also had now become numerous again. Penguins were swimming about, filling the air with their discordant cries, while there was literally no end of the cape-pigeons and petrels. Albatrosses, too, helped to make up the picture of animated nature, while whales were often heard blowing in the adjacent waters. Gardiner now saw many signs of the proximity of land, and began to hope he should yet actually discover the islands laid down on his chart, as their position had been given by Daggett.

In that high latitude a degree of longitude is necessarily much shorter than when nearer to the middle of our orb. On the equator a degree of longitude measures, as is known to most boarding-school young ladies, just sixty geographical, or sixty-nine and a half English statute miles. But, as it is not known to most boarding-school young ladies, or is understood by very few of them indeed, even when known, in the sixty-second degree of latitude, a degree of longitude measures but little more than thirty-two of those very miles. The solution of this seeming contradiction is so very simple that it may assist a certain class of our readers if we explain it, by telling them that it arises solely from the fact that these degrees of longitude, which are placed sixty geographical miles asunder at the center or middle of the earth, converge toward the poles, where they all meet in a point. According to the best observations Roswell Gardiner could obtain, he was just one of these short degrees of longitude, or two-and-thirty miles, to the westward of the parallel where he wished to be, when the wind came from the southward. The change was favorable, as it emboldened him to run nearer than he otherwise might have felt disposed to do, to the great barrier of ice which now formed a sort of weather-shore. Fortunately, the loose bergs and sunken masses had drifted off so far to the northward, that once within them the schooner had pretty plain sailing; and Roswell, to lose none of the precious time of the season, ventured to run, though under very short canvas, the whole of the short night that succeeded. It is a great assistance to the navigation of those seas that, during the summer months, there is scarcely any night at all, giving the adventurer sufficient light by which to thread his way among the difficulties of his pathless journey.

When the sun reappeared, on the morning of the sixth day after he had left the Horn, Roswell Gardiner believed himself to be far enough west for his purposes. It now remained to get a whole degree farther to the south, which was a vast distance in those seas and in that direction, and would carry him a long way to the southward of the "Ne Plus Ultra." If there was any truth in Daggett, how-

ever, that mariner had been there; and the instructions of the owner rendered it incumbent on our young man to attempt to follow him. More than once, that morning, did our hero regret he had not entered into terms with the Vineyard men, that the effort might have been made in company. There was something so portentous in a lone vessel's venturing within the ice, in so remote a region, that, to say the truth, Roswell hesitated. But pride of profession, ambition, love of Mary, dread of the deacon, native resolution, and the hardihood produced by experience in dangers often encountered and escaped, nerved him to the undertaking. It must be attempted, or the voyage would be lost; and our young mariner now set about his task with a stern determination to achieve it.

By this time the schooner had luffed up within a cable's length of the ice, along the margin of which she was running under easy sail. Gardiner believed himself to be quite as far to the westward as was necessary, and his present object was to find an opening, by means of which he could enter among the floating chaos that was spread, far and wide, to windward. As the breeze was driving the drifting masses to the northward, they became loosened and more separated every moment; and glad enough was Gardiner to discover, at length, a clear spot that seemed to favor his views. Without an instant's delay, the sheets were flattened in, a pull was taken on the braces, and away went the little *Sea Lion* into a passage that had a hundred-fold more real causes of terror than the Scylla and Charybdis of old.

One effect of the vicinity of ice, in extensive fields, is to produce comparatively still water. It must blow a gale, and that over a considerable extent of open sea, to produce much commotion among the fields and bergs, though that heaving and setting, which has been likened to the respiration of some monster, and which seamen call the "ground-swell," is never entirely wanting among the waters of an ocean. On the present occasion our adventurers were favored in this respect, their craft gliding forward unimpeded by anything like opposing billows. At the end of four hours, the schooner, tacking and wearing when necessary, had worked her way to the southward and westward, according to her master's reckoning, some five-and-twenty miles. It was then noon, and the atmosphere being unusually clear, though never without fog, Gardiner went aloft, to take a look for himself at the condition of things around him.

To the northward, and along the very passage by which the vessel had sailed, the ice was closing, and it was far easier to go on than to return. To the eastward, and toward the southeast in particular, however, did Roswell Gardiner turn his longing eyes. Somewhere in that quarter of the ocean, and distant now less than ten leagues, did he expect to find the islands of which he was in quest, if indeed they had any existence at all. In that direction there were many passages open among the ice, the latter being generally higher than in the particular place to which the vessel had reached. Once or twice, Roswell mistook the summits of some of these bergs for real mountains, when, owing to the manner in which the light fell upon them, or rather did not fall upon them directly, they appeared dark and earthy. Each time, however, the sun's rays soon came to undeceive him; and that which had so lately been black and frowning, was, as by the touch of magic, suddenly illuminated, and became bright and gorgeous, throwing out its emerald hues, or perhaps a virgin white, that filled the beholder with delight, even amid the terrors and dangers by which, in very truth, he was surrounded. The glorious Alps themselves, those wonders of the earth, could scarcely compete in scenery with the views that Nature lavished, in that remote sea, on a seeming void. But the might and honor of God were there, as well as beneath the equator.

For one whole hour did Roswell Gardiner remain in the cross-trees, having hailed the deck, and caused the schooner's head to be turned to the southeast, pressing her through the openings as near the

wind as she could go. The atmosphere was never without fog, though the vapor drifted about, leaving large vacancies that were totally clear. One spot, in particular, seemed to be a favorite resting-place for these low clouds, which just there appeared to light upon the face of the ocean itself. A wide field of ice, or, it were better to say, a broad belt of bergs, lay between this stationary cloud and the schooner, though the existence of the vapor early caught Roswell's attention; and during the hour he was aloft, conning the craft through a very intricate and ticklish channel, not a minute passed that the young man did not turn a look toward that veiled spot. He was in the act of placing a foot on the ratlin below him, to descend to the deck, when he half-unconsciously turned to take a last glance at this distant and seemingly immovable object. Just then, the vapor, which had kept rolling and moving, like a fluid in ebullition, while it still clung together, suddenly opened, and the bald head of a real mountain, a thousand feet high, came unexpectedly into the view! There could be no mistake; all was too plain to admit of a doubt. There, beyond all question, was land; and it was doubtless the most western of the islands described by the dying seaman. Everything corroborated this conclusion. The latitude and longitude were right, or nearly so, and the other circumstances went to confirm the conjecture, or conclusion. Daggett had said that one island, high, mountainous, ragged, and bleak, but of some size, lay the most westerly in the group, while several others were within a few miles of it. The last were lower, much smaller, and little more than naked rocks. One of these last, however, he insisted on it, was a volcano in activity, and that at intervals it emitted flames as well as a fierce heat. By his account, however, the party to which he belonged had never actually visited that volcanic caldron, being satisfied with admiring its terrors from a distance.

As to the existence of the land, Roswell got several pretty distinct and certain views, leaving no doubt of its character and position. There is a theory which tells us that the orb of day is surrounded by a luminous vapor, the source of heat and light, and that this vapor, being in constant motion, occasionally leaves the mass of the planet itself to be seen, forming what it is usual to term the "spots on the sun." Resembling this theory, the fogs of the antarctic seas rolled about the mountain now seen, withdrawing the curtain at times, and permitting a view of the striking and majestic object within. Well did that lone and nearly barren mass of earth and rock merit these appellations! The elevation has already been given; and a rock that is nearly perpendicular, rising out of the ocean for a thousand feet, is ever imposing and grand. This was rendered so much the more by its loneliness, its stable and stern position amid floating and moving mountains of ice, its brown sides and bold summit, the latter then recently whitened with a fall of pure snow, and its frowning and fixed aspect amid a scene that might otherwise be said to be ever in motion.

Roswell Gardiner's heart beat with delight when assured of success in discovering this, the first great goal of his destination. To reach it was now his all-absorbing desire. By this time the wind had got round to the southwest, and was blowing quite fresh, bringing him well to windward of the mountain, but causing the icebergs to drift in toward the land, and placing an impassable barrier along its western shore. Our young man, however, remembered that Daggett had given the anchorage as on the northeastern side of the island, where, according to his statements, a little haven would be found, in which a dozen craft might lie in security. To this quarter of the island Gardiner consequently endeavored to get.

There was no opening to the northward, but a pretty good channel was before the schooner to the southward of the group. In this direction, then, the *Sea Lion* was steered, and by eight bells (four in the afternoon) the southern point of the largest island was doubled. The rest of the group were made, and to the infinite delight of all on board her, abundance of clear water

was found between the main island and its smaller neighbors. The bergs had grounded, apparently, as they drew near the group, leaving this large bay entirely free from ice, with the exception of a few small masses that were floating through it. These bodies, whether field or berg, were easily avoided; and away the schooner went, with flowing sheets, into the large basin formed by the different members of the group. To render "assurance doubly sure," as to the information of Daggett, the smoke of a volcano arose from a rock to the eastward, that appeared to be some three or four miles in circumference, and which stood on the eastern side of the great basin, or some four leagues from Sealer's Land, as Daggett had at once named the principal island. This was, in fact, about the breadth of the main basin, which had two principal passages into it, the one from the south and the other from the northeast.

Once within the islands, and reasonably clear of all ice, it was an easy thing for the schooner to run across the basin, or great bay, and reach the northeastern extremity of Sealer's Land. As the light would continue some hours longer, there being very little night in that high latitude in December, the month that corresponds to our June, Roswell caused a boat to be lowered and manned, when he pulled at once toward the spot where it struck him the haven must be found, if there were any such place at all. Everything turned out as it had been described by Daggett, and great was our young man's satisfaction when he rowed into a cove that was little more than two hundred yards in diameter, and which was so completely land-locked as not to feel the influence of any sea outside. In general, the great difficulty is to land on any of the antarctic rocks, the breakers and surf opposing it; but in this spot the smallest boat could be laid with its bow on a beach of shingle, without the slightest risk of its being injured. The lead also announced good anchorage in about eight fathoms of water. In a word, this little haven was one of those small basins that so often occur in mountainous islands, where fragments of rocks appear to have fallen from the principal mass as it was forced upward out of the ocean, as if purposely intended to meet the wants of mariners.

Nor was the outer bay, or the large basin formed by the entire group, by any means devoid of advantages to the navigator. From north to south this outer bay was at least six leagues in length, while its breadth could not much have fallen short of four. Of course it was much more exposed to the winds and waves than the little harbor proper, though Roswell was struck with the great advantages it offered in several essential particulars. It was almost clear of ice, while so much was floating about outside of the circle of islands; thus leaving a free navigation in it for even the smallest boat. This was mainly owing to the fact that the largest island had two long crescent-shaped capes, the one at its northeastern and the other at its southeastern extremity, giving to its whole eastern side the shape of a new moon. The harbor just described was to the southward of, or within, the northeastern cape, which our young master at once named Cape Hazard, in honor of his chief mate's vigilance; that officer having been the first to point out the facilities probably offered by the formation of the land for an anchorage.

Though rocky and broken, it was by no means difficult to ascend the rugged banks on the northern side of the harbor, and Gardiner went up it, attended by Stimson, who of late had much attached himself to the person of his commander. The height of this barrier above the waves of the ocean was but a little less than a hundred feet, and when the summit was reached, a common exclamation of surprise, not to say delight, broke from the lips of both. Hitherto not a seal of any sort had been seen, and Gardiner had felt some misgivings touching the benefits that were to be derived from so much hardship, exposure, and enterprise. All doubts, however, vanished, the instant he got a sight of the northern shore of the island. This shore,

a reach of several miles in extent, was fairly alive with the monsters of which he was in search. They lay in thousands on the low rocks that lined that entire side of the island, basking in the sun of the antarctic seas. There they were, sure enough! Sea lions, sea elephants, huge, clumsy, fierce-looking and revolting creatures, belonging properly to neither sea nor land. These animals were constantly going and coming in crowds, some waddling to the margin of the rock and tumbling into the ocean in search of food, while others scrambled out of the water, and got upon shelves and other convenient places to repose and enjoy the light of day. There was very little contention or fighting among these revolting-looking creatures, though nearly every known species of the larger seals was among them.

"There is famous picking for us, Master Stephen," said Roswell to his companion, fairly rubbing his hands in delight. "One month's smart work will fill the schooner and we can be off beyond the equinox. Does it not seem to you that yonder are the bones of sea lions, or of seals of some sort, lying hereaway, as if men had been at work on the creatures?"

"No doubt on't at all, Captain Gar'ner; as much out of the way as this island is—and I never heard of the place afore, old a sealer as I am—but, as much out of the way as it is, we are not the first to find it. Somebody has been here, and that within a year or two; and he has picked up a cargo, too, depend on't."

As all this merely corresponded with Daggett's account of the place, Roswell felt no surprise; on the contrary, he saw in it a confirmation of all that Daggett had stated, and as furnishing so much the more reason to hope for a successful termination to the voyage in all its parts. While on the rocks Roswell took such a survey of the localities as might enable him to issue his orders hereafter with discretion and intelligence. The schooner was already making short tacks to get close in with the island, in obedience to a signal to that effect; and the second mate had pulled out to the entrance of the little haven, with a view to act as pilot. Before the captain had descended from the summit of the northern barrier, the vessel came in under her jib, the wind being nearly aft, and she dropped two anchors in suitable spots, making another flying moor of it.

General joy now illuminated every face. It was, in itself, a great point gained to get the schooner into a perfectly safe haven, where her people could take their natural rest at night, or during their watches below, without feeling any apprehension of being crushed in the ice; but here was not only security, but the source of that wealth of which they were in quest, and which had induced them all to encounter so many privations and so much danger. The crew landed to a man, each individual ascending to the summit of the barrier, to feast his eyes on the spectacle that lay spread in such affluent abundance along the low rocks of the northern side of the island.

As there were yet several hours of light remaining, Roswell, still attended by Stimson, each armed with a sealing-spear or lance, not only as a weapon of defense, but as a leaping-staff, set out to climb as high up the central acclivity of the island as circumstances would allow him to go. He was deceived in the distance, however, and soon found that an entire day would be necessary to achieve such an enterprise, could it be performed at all; but he did succeed in reaching a low spur of the central mountain that commanded a wide and noble view of all that lay to the north and east of it. From this height, which must have been a few hundred feet above the level of the ocean, our adventurers got a still better view of the whole north coast, or of what might have been called the sealing quarter of the island. They also got a tolerably accurate idea of the general formation of that lone fragment of rock and earth, as well as of the islets and islands that lay in its vicinity.

The outline of the first was that of a rude, and of course an irregular triangle, the three principal points of which were the two low capes already mentioned, and a third that lay to the northward and westward. The whole of the western or

southwestern shore seemed to be a nearly perpendicular wall of rock, that, in the main, rose some two or three hundred feet above the ocean. Against this side of the island, in particular, the waves of the ocean were sullenly beating, while the ice drove up "home," as sailors express it; showing a vast depth of water. On the two other sides it was different. The winds prevailed most from the southwest, which rendered the perpendicular face of the island its weather wall; while the two other sides of the triangle were more favored by position. The north side, of course, lay most exposed to the sun, everything of this nature being reversed in the southern hemisphere from what we have it in the northern; while the eastern, or northeastern side, to be precisely accurate, was protected by the group of islands that lay in its front. Such was the general character of Sealer's Land, so far as the hurried observations of its present master enabled him to ascertain. The near approach of night induced him now to hasten to get off of the somewhat dangerous acclivities to which he had climbed, and to rejoin his people and his schooner.

CHAPTER XV.

"Ye dart upon the deep, and straight is heard
A wilder roar; and men grow pale, and pray:
Ye fling its waters round you, as a bird
Flings o'er his shivering plumes the fountain's spray.
See! to the breaking masts the sailor clings!
Ye scoop the ocean to its briny springs,
And take the mountain billows on your wings,
And pile the wreck of navies round the bay."
—BRYANT'S WINDS.

No unnecessary delay was permitted to interfere with the one great purpose of the sealers. The season was so short, and the difficulties and dangers of entering among and of quitting the ice were so very serious, that every soul belonging to the schooner felt the importance of activity and industry. The very day that succeeded the vessel's arrival, not only was great progress made in the preliminary arrangements, but a goodly number of fur-seals, of excellent quality, were actually killed and secured. Two noble sea-elephants were also lanced, animals that measured near thirty feet in length, each of which yielded a very ample return for the risk and trouble of taking it, in oil. The skins of the fur-seals, however, were Roswell's principal object; and glad enough was he to find the creature that pays this tribute to the wants and luxuries of man, in numbers sufficient to promise him a speedy return to the northward. While the slaughter, and skinning, and curing, and trying out, were all in active operation, our young man paid some attention to certain minor arrangements, which had a direct bearing on the comforts of his people, as well as the getting in of cargo.

An old storehouse, of respectable size, had stood on the deacon's wharf, while the schooner was fitting out, but it had been taken to pieces, in order to make room for a more eligible substitute. The materials of this building Roswell Gardiner had persuaded his owner to send on board, and they had all been received and stowed away, a part below and a part on deck, as a provision for the possible wants of the people. As it was necessary to clear the decks and break out the hold, all these materials, consisting principally of the timbers of the frame, the siding, and a quantity of planks and boards, were now floated ashore in the cove, and hauled up on the rocks. Roswell took a leisure moment to select a place for the site of his building, which he intended to erect at once, in order to save the time that would otherwise be lost in pulling between the schooner and the shore.

It was not difficult to find the sort of spot that was desirable for the dwelling. That chosen by Gardiner was a shelf of rock of sufficient extent, that lay perfectly exposed to the north and northeast, or to the sunny side of the island, while it was sheltered from the south and southwest by masses of rock, that formed a complete protection against the colder winds of the region. These walls of stone, however, were not sufficiently near to permit any snows they might collect to impend over the building, but enough space

was left between them and the house, to admit of a capacious yard, in which might be placed any articles that were necessary to the ordinary work, or to the wants of the sealers.

Had it been advisable to set all hands at the business of slaughtering, Roswell Gardiner certainly would not have lost the time he did, in the erection of his house. But our master was a judicious and wary commander at his calling. The seals were now perfectly tame, and nothing was easier than to kill them in scores. The great difficulty was in removing the spoils across the rocks, as it was sometimes necessary to do so for a distance of several miles. Means were found, in the end, to use the boats on this service, though even then, at midsummer, the northern shore of the island was frequently so closely beset by the ice as completely to block up the passage. This, too, occurred at times when the larger bay was nearly free, and the cove, which went by the name of the "Deacon's Bight" among the men, was entirely so. In order to prevent a premature panic among the victims of this intended foray, then, Gardiner allowed no one to go out to "kill" but the experienced hands, and no more to be slain each day than could be skinned or cut up at that particular time. In consequence of this prudent caution, the work soon got into a regular train; and it was early found that more was done in this mode, than could have been effected by a less guarded assault on the seals.

As for the materials of the building, they were hauled up the rocks without much difficulty. The frame was of some size, as is the case generally with most old constructions in America; but being of pine, thoroughly seasoned, the sills and plates were not so heavy but that they might be readily enough handled by the non-sealing portion of the crew. Robert Smith, the landsman, was a carpenter by trade, and it fell to his lot to put together again the materials of the old warehouse. Had there not been such a mechanic among the crew, however, a dozen Americans could, at any time, construct a house, the "rough and ready" habits of the people usually teaching them, in a rude way, a good deal of a great many other arts, besides this of the carpenter. Mott had served a part of his time with a blacksmith, and he now set up his forge. When the frame was ready, all hands assembled to assist in raising it; and, by the end of the first week, the building was actually inclosed, the labor amounting to no more than putting each portion in its place and securing it there, the saw being scarcely used during the whole process. This building had two apartments, one of which Gardiner appropriated to the uses of a sitting-room, and the other to that of a dormitory. Rough bunks were constructed, and the mattresses of the men were all brought ashore and put in the house. It was intended that everybody should sleep in the building, as it would save a great deal of going to and fro, as well as a great deal of time. The cargo was to be collected on a shelf of rock, that lay about twenty feet below that on which the building stood; by following which, it was possible to turn the highest point of the pass, that which formed the southern protection of the building, and come out on the side of the cove at another shelf, that was not more than fifty feet above the level of the vessel's decks. Down this last declivity, Roswell proposed to lower his casks by means of a projecting derrick, the rock being sufficiently precipitous to admit of this arrangement, while his spare spars furnished him with the necessary means. Thus was every preparation made with judgment and foresight.

In this manner did the first ten days pass, every man and boy being as busy as bees. To own the truth, no attention was paid to the Sabbath, which would seem to have been left behind them by the people, among the descendants of those Puritans who were so rigid in their observance of that festival. At the end of the time just mentioned, a great deal had been done. The house, such as it was, was completed. To be sure, it was nothing but an old storehouse revamped, but it was found to be of infinite service, and greatly did all hands felicitate themselves at having

brought its materials along with them. Even those who had most complained of the labor of getting the timbers on board, had the most often cursed them for being in the way during the passage, and had continued the loudest to deride the idea of "sealers turning carpenters," were shortly willing to allow that the possession of this dwelling was of the greatest value to them, and that, so far from the extra work's causing them to fall behind in their main operations, the comfort they found, in having a home like this to go to, after a long day's toil, refreshed them to a degree which enabled every man to return to his labor with a zeal and an energy that might otherwise have been wanting.

Although it was in the warmest season of the year, and the nights could scarcely be called nights at all, yet the sun never got very low without leaving a chilliness in the air that would have rendered sleeping without a cover and a protection from the winds not only excessively uncomfortable, but somewhat dangerous. Indeed, it was often found necessary to light a fire in the old warehouse. This was done by means of a capacious box-stove, that was almost as old as the building itself, and which had also been brought along as an article of great necessity in that climate. Fuel could not be wanting, so long as the "scraps" from the try-works abounded, and there were many more of these than were needed to "try out" the sea elephant oil. The schooner, however, had a very ample supply of wood to burn, that being an article which abounded on Shelter Island, and which the deacon had consented to lay in, in some abundance. Gardiner got this concession out of the miserly temperament of the old man, by persuading him that a sealer could not work to any advantage unless he had the means of occasionally warming himself. The miserly propensities of the deacon were not so engrossing that he did not comprehend the wisdom of making sufficient outlay to secure the execution of his main object; and among other things of this nature, the schooner had sailed with a very large supply of wood, as has just been stated. Wood and onions, indeed, were more abundant in her than any other stores.

The arrangements described were completed by the end of the first fortnight, during which period the business of sealing was also carried on with great industry and success. So very tame were the victims, and so totally unconscious of the danger they incurred from the presence of man, that the crew moved round among them, seemingly but very little observed, and not at all molested. The utmost care was taken to give no unnecessary alarm; and when an animal was lanced, it was done in such a quiet way as to produce as little commotion as possible. By the end of the time named, however, the sealing had got so advanced as to require the aid of all hands in securing the spoils. To work, then, everybody went, with a hearty good-will; and the shelf of rock just below the house was soon well garnished with casks and skins. Had the labor been limited to the mere killing, and skinning, and curing, and barreling of oil, it would have been comparatively quite light; but the necessity of transporting the fruits of all this skill and and luck considerable distances, in some cases several miles, and this over broken rocks, formed the great obstacle to immediate success. It was the opinion of Roswell Gardiner, that he could have filled his schooner in a month, were it possible to place her directly alongside of the rocks frequented by the seals, and prevent all this toil in transporting. This, however, was impossible, the waves and the ice rendering it certain destruction to lay a craft anywhere along the northern shore of the island. The boats might be, and occasionally they were used, bringing loads of skin and oil round the cape, quite into the cove. These little cargoes were immediately transferred to the hold of the schooner, a ground tier of large casks having been left in her purposely to receive the oil, which was emptied into them by means of a hose. By the end of the third week, this ground tier was filled, and the craft became stiff, and was in good ballast trim, although the spare water was now entirely pumped out of her.

All this time the weather was very fair

for so high a latitude, and every way propitious. The twenty-third day after the schooner got in, Roswell was standing on a spur of the hill, at no great distance from the house, overlooking the long reach of rocky coast over which the "sea-elephants," and "lions," and "dogs," and "bears," were waddling in as much seeming security as the hour when he first saw them. The sun was just rising, and the seals were clambering up out of the water to enjoy its warm rays, as they placed themselves in positions favorable to such a purpose.

"That is a pleasant sight to a true sealer, Captain Gar'ner," observed Stimson, who as usual had kept near his officer, "and one that I can say I never before saw equaled. I've been in this business now some five-and-twenty years, and never before have I met with so safe a harbor for a craft, and so large herds that have not been stirred up and got to be skeary."

"We have certainly been very fortunate thus far, Stephen, and I am now in hopes we may fill up and be off in good season to get clear of the ice," returned Roswell. "Our luck has been surprising, all things considered."

"You call it luck, Captain Gar'ner; but in my creed, there is a truer and better word for it, sir."

"Ay, I know well enough what you mean, Stephen; though I cannot fancy that Providence cares much whether we shall take a hundred seals to-day, or none at all."

"Such is not my idee, sir; and I'm not ashamed to own it. In my humble way of thinking, Captain Gar'ner, the finger of Divine Providence is in all that comes to pass; if not straight ahead like, as a body would receive a fall, still, by sartain laws that bring about everything that is to happen, just as it does happen. I believe now, sir, that Providence does not intend we shall take any seals at all to-day, sir."

"Why not, Stimson? It is the very finest day we have had since we have been on the island."

"That's true enough; and it is this glorious sunny day, glorious and sunny for sich a high latitude, that makes me feel and think that this day was not intended for work. You probably forget it is the Sabbath, Captain Gar'ner!"

"Sure enough; I had forgotten that, Stephen; but we sealers seldom lie by for such a reason."

"So much the worse for us sealers, then, sir. This is my seventeenth v'y'ge into these seas, sir, and I will say that more of them have been made with officers and crews that did *not* keep the Sabbath, than with officers and crews that did. Still, I have obsarved one thing, sir, that the man who takes his rest one day in seven, and freshens his mind, as it might be, with thinking of other matters than his every-day consarns, comes to his task with so much better will, when he *does* set about it, as to turn off greater profit than if he worked night and day, Sundays and all."

Roswell Gardiner had no great reverence for the Christian Sabbath, and this more because it was so *called*, than for any sufficient reason in itself. Pride of reason rendered him jealous of everything like a concession to the faith of those who believed in the Son of God; and he was very apt to dissent from all admission that had even the most remote bearing on its truth. Still, as a kind-hearted commander, as well as a judicious reasoner on the economy of his fellow-creatures, he fully felt the policy of granting relaxation to labor. Nor was he indisposed to believe in the care of a Divine Providence, or in its justice, though less believing in this respect than the illiterate but earnest-minded seaman who stood at his side. He knew very well that "all work, and no play, makes Jack a dull boy;" and he understood well enough that it was good for a man, at stated seasons, to raise his mind from the cares and business of this world, to muse on those of the world that is to come. Though inclined to Deism, Roswell worshiped in his heart the Creator of all he saw and understood, as well as much that he could neither scan nor comprehend.

"This is not the seaman's usual way of thinking," returned our hero, after re-

garding his companion for a moment, a little intently. "With us, there is very little Sabbath in blue water."

"Too little, sir; much too little. Depend on't, Captain Gar'ner, God is on the face of the waters as well as on the hill-tops. His Spirit is everywhere; and it must grieve it to see human beings, that have been created in his image, so bent on gain as to set apart no time even for rest; much less for his worship and praise!"

"I am not certain you are wrong, Stimson, and I feel much more sure that you are right as a political economist than in your religion. There *should* be seasons of rest and reflection—yet I greatly dislike losing a day as fine as this."

"'The better the day, the better the deed,' sir. No time is lost to him who stops in his work to think a little of his God. Our crew is used to having a Sabbath; and though we work on lays, there is not a hand aboard us, Captain Gar'ner, who would not be glad to hear the word pass among 'em which should say this is the Lord's day, and you've to knock off your labor."

"As I believe you understand the people, Stephen, and we have had a busy time of it since we got in, I'll take you at your word, and give the order. Go and tell Mr. Hazard there'll be no duty carried on to-day beyond what is indispensable. It is Sunday, and we'll make it a day of rest."

Truth compels us to say that Roswell was quite as much influenced in giving this order, by recollecting the pleasure it would give Mary, as by any higher consideration.

Glad enough was Stimson to hear this order, and away he hastened to find the mate, that it might at once be communicated to the men. Although this well-disposed seaman a little overrated the motives of a portion of the crew at least, he was right enough as to the manner in which they would receive the new regulation. Rest and relaxation had become, in a measure, necessary to them; and leisure was also needed to enable the people to clean themselves; the business in which they had been engaged being one that accumulates oily substances, and requiring occasional purifications of the body in order to preserve the health. The scurvy, that great curse of long voyages, is as much owing to neglect of cleanliness as to diet.

No sooner was it known that this day was to be treated as the Sabbath, than soap, razors, scissors, and all the usual appliances of the sailor's toilet, were drawn out of bags and chests, and paraded about on the rocks. An hour passed in scrubbing, shaving, cutting hair, holding garments up to the light to look for holes and ascertain their condition, and rummaging among "properties," as the player would term the different wardrobes that were thus brought into view. The mates came out of the *mêlée* "shaved and shorn," as well as neatly attired; and there was not a man on the island who did not look like a different being from what he had appeared an hour before, in consequence of this pause in the regular business of sealing, and the promised holiday. A strict order was given that no one should go among the seals, as it was feared that some indiscretion or other might have a tendency to create an alarm. In all other respects the island was placed at the disposal of the men, if anything could be made of such a lone spot, a speck on the surface of the antarctic seas, and nearly encircled by mountains of floating ice.

As for Roswell himself, after reading a chapter or two in Mary Pratt's Bible, he determined to make another effort to ascend to the summit of the sterile rocks which capped the pile that rose vertically in the center of the island. The day was nearly all before him; and, summoning Stimson as a companion, for he had taken a great fancy to this man, away he went, young, active, and full of buoyancy. Almost at the same instant, Hazard, the chief mate, pulled out of the cove in one of the whale-boats, manned by volunteers, and provided with sails, with an intention to cross the Great Bay, and get a nearer view of the volcanic hill, out of which smoke was constantly pour-

ing, and occasionally flames. The second mate and one or two of the hands remained near the house, to keep a lookout on the vessel and other property.

The season had now advanced to the first day of January, a month that in the southern hemisphere corresponds with our own July. As Roswell picked his way among the broken rocks that covered the ascent to what might be termed the table-land of the island, if indeed any portion of so ragged a bit of this earth could properly be so named, his thoughts recurred to this question of the season, and to the probability of his getting a cargo before it would be absolutely necessary to go to the northward. On the whole, he fancied his chances good; and such he found to be Stimson's opinion, when this experienced sealer was questioned on the subject.

"We've begun right in all respects but one, Captain Gar'ner," said Stephen, as he closed his remarks on the subject; "and even in that matter, in which we made a small mistake at the outset, we are improving, and I hope will come out right in the end. I said a *small* mistake, but in this I'm wrong, as it was a *great* mistake."

"And what was it, Stephen? Make no bones of telling me of any blunder I may have committed, according to your views of duty. You are so much older than myself, that I'll stand it."

"Why, sir, it's not in seamanship, or in sealing; if it was, I'd hold my tongue; but it's in not keeping the Lord's day from the hour when we lifted our anchor in that bay that bears the name of your family, Captain Gar'ner; and which ought to be, and I make no doubt *is*, dear to you on that account, if for no other reason. I rather think, from what they tell me, that the old Lord Gar'ner of all had much preaching of the word, and much praying to the Lord, in the old times, when he lived there."

"There never was any *Lord* Gardiner among us," returned Roswell modestly, "though it was a fashion among the East-enders to give that title to the owner of the island. My ancestor who first got the place was Lyon Gardiner, an engineer in the service of the colony of Connecticut."

"Well, whether he was a lion or a lamb, I'll answer for it the Lord was not forgotten on that island, Captain Gar'ner, and he shouldn't be on this. No man ever lost anything in this world, or in that which is to come a'ter it, by remembering once in seven days to call on his Creator to help him on his path. I've heard it said, sir, that you're a little partic'lar like in your ideas of religion, and that you do not altogether hold to the doctrines that are preached up and down the land."

Roswell felt his cheeks warm at this remark, and he thought of Mary, and of her meek reliance on that Saviour whom, in the pride of his youth, strength, and, as he fancied, of his reason also, he doubted about, as being the Son of God. The picture thus presented to his mind had its pleasant and its unpleasant features. Strange as it may seem, it is certain that the young man would have loved, would have respected Mary less than he now did, could he imagine that *she* entertained the same notions on this very subject as those he entertained himself! Few men relish infidelity in a woman, whose proper sphere would seem to be in believing and in worshiping, and not in caviling, or in splitting straws on matters of faith. Perhaps it is that we are apt to associate laxity of morals with laxity of belief, and have a general distaste for releasing the other sex from any, even the smallest of the restraints that the dogmas of the church impose; but we hold it to be without dispute that, with very few exceptions, every man would prefer that the woman in whom he feels an interest should err on the side of bigotry rather than on that of what is called liberalism in points of religious belief. Thus it is with most of us, and thus was it with Roswell Gardiner. He could not wonder at Mary's rigid notions, considering her education; and, on the whole, he rather liked her the better for them, at the very moment that he felt they might endanger his own happiness. If women thoroughly understood how much of their real power and influence

with men arises from their seeming dependence, there would be very little tolerance in their own circles for those among them who are for proclaiming their independence and their right to equality in all things.

While our young mariner and his companion were working their way up to the table-land, which lay fully three hundred feet above the level of the sea, there was little opportunity for further discourse, so rough was the way, and so difficult the ascent. At the summit, however, there was a short pause, ere the two undertook the mountain proper, and they came to a halt to take a look at the aspect of things around them. There was the boat, a mere white speck on the water, flying away with a fresh northerly breeze toward the volcano, while the smoke from the latter made a conspicuous and not very distant landmark. Nearer at home, all appeared unusually plain for a region in which fogs were apt to prevail. The cove lay almost beneath them, and the schooner, just then, struck the imagination of her commander, as a fearfully small craft to come so far from home and to penetrate so deep among the mazes of the ice. It was that ice itself, however, that attracted most of Roswell's attention. Far as the eye could reach, north, south, east, and west, the ocean was brilliant and chill with the vast floating masses. The effect on the air was always perceptible in that region, "killing the summer," as the sealers expressed it; but it seemed to be doubly so at the elevation to which the two adventures had attained. Still, the panorama was magnificent. The only part of the ocean that did not seem to be alive with icebergs, if one may use such an expression, was the space within the group, and that was as clear as an estuary in a mild climate. It really appeared as if nature had tabooed that privileged spot, in order that the communication between the different islands should remain open. Of course, the presence of so many obstacles to the billows without, and indeed even to the rake of the winds, produced smooth water within, the slow, breath-like heaving and setting of the ceaseless ground-swell, being the only perceptible motion to the water inside.

"'Tis a very remarkable view, Stephen," said Roswell Gardiner, "but there will be one much finer, if we can work our way up that cone of a mountain, and stand on its naked cap. I wish I had brought an old ensign and a small spar along to set up the gridiron in honor of the States. We're beginning to put out our feelers, old Stimson, and shall have 'em on far better bits of territory than this, before the earth has gone round in its track another hundred years."

"Well, to my notion, Captain Gar'ner," answered the seaman, following his officer toward the base of the cone, "Uncle Sam has got more land now than he knows what to do with. If a body could discover a bit of ocean, or a largish sort of a sea, there might be some use in it. Whales are getting to be skeary, and are mostly driven off their own grounds; and as for seals, you must bury yourself, craft and all, up to the truck in ice, to get a smile from one of their good-lookin' count'nances, as I always say."

"I'm afraid, Stephen, it is all over with the discovery of more seas. Even the moon, they now say, is altogether without water, having not so much as a lake or a large pond to take a duck in."

"Without water, sir!" exclaimed Stimson, quite aghast. "If 'tis so, sir, it *must* be right, since the same hand that made the moon made this 'arth and all it contains. But what *can* they do for seafaring folks in the moon, if what you tell me, Captain Gar'ner, is the truth?"

"They must do without them. I fancy oil and skins are not very much in demand among the moonites, Stephen. What's that, off here to the eastward, eh? East-and-by-north-half-east, or so?"

"I see what you mean, sir. It does look wonderfully like a sail, and a sail pretty well surrounded by ice, too!"

There was no mistake in the matter. The white canvas of a vessel was plainly visible, over a vast breadth of field ice, a little to the northward of the island that lay directly opposite the cove. Although the sails of this stranger were spread, it

was plain enough he was closely beset, if not actually jammed. From the first instant he saw the strange craft, Roswell had not a doubt of her character. He felt convinced it was his late consort, the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard, which had found her way to the group by means of some hint that had fallen into Daggett's hands, if not by a positive nautical instinct. So great had been his own success, however, and so certain did he now feel of filling up in due season, that he cared much less for this invasion on his privacy than he would have done a fortnight earlier. On the contrary, it might be a good thing to have a consort in the event of any accident occurring to his own vessel. From the moment, then, that Gardiner felt certain of the character of the strange sail, his policy was settled in his own mind. It was to receive his old acquaintance with good-will, and to help fill him up, too, as soon as he had secured his own cargo, in order that they might sail for home in company. By his aid and advice the other schooner might save a week in time at that most important season of the year; and by the experience and exertions of his people, a whole month in filling up might readily be gained.

All thoughts of climbing the peak were at once abandoned; and, in fifteen minutes after the sail was seen, Roswell and Stephen both came panting down to the house; so much easier is it to descend in this world than to mount. A swivel was instanly loaded and fired as a signal; and, in half an hour, a boat was manned and ready. Roswell took command himself, leaving his second mate to look after the schooner. Stimson went with his captain, and less than one hour after he had first seen the strange sail, our hero was actually pulling out of the cove, with a view to go to her assistance. Roswell Gardiner was as good-hearted a fellow as ever lived. He had a sufficient regard for his own interests, as well as for those of others intrusted to his care; but, these main points looked after, he would cheerfully have worked a month to relieve the Vineyard men from the peril that so plainly beset them. Setting his sails the instant the boat was clear of the rocks, away he went, then, as fast as ash and canvas could carry him, which was at a rate but little short of eight knots in the hour.

As he was thus flying toward his object, our young mariner formed a theory in his own mind, touching the drift of the ice in the adjacent seas. It was simply this. He had sounded in entering the great bay, and had ascertained that comparatively shallow water existed between the southeastern extremity of Sealer's Land and the nearest island opposite. It was deep enough to admit the largest vessel that ever floated, and a great deal more than this; but it was not deep enough to permit an iceberg to pass. The tides, too, ran in races among the islands, which prevented the accumulation of ice at the southern entrance, while the outer currents seemed to set everything past the group, to allow of the floating mountains to collect to the eastward, where they appeared to be thronged. It was on the western verge of this wilderness of icebergs and ice fields that the strange sail had been seen working her way toward the group, which must be plainly in view from her decks, as her distance from the nearest of the islands certainly did not exceed two leagues.

It required more than two hours for the whale-boat of Roswell to cross the bay, and reach the margin of that vast field of ice which was prevented from drifting into the open space only by encountering the stable rocks of the first of the group. Every eye was now turned in quest of an opening, by means of which it might be possible to get further to the eastward. One, at length, was discovered, and into it Gardiner dashed, ordering his boat's crew to stretch themselves out at their oars, though every man with him thought they were plunging into possible destruction. On the boat went, however, now sheering to starboard, now to port, to avoid projecting spurs of ice, until she had plowed her way through a fearfully narrow, and a deviating passage, that sometimes barely permitted them to go through, until a spot was reached where the two

fields which formed this strait actually came in close, crushing contact with each other. Roswell took a look before and behind him, saw that his boat was safe, owing to the formation of the two outlines of the respective fields, when he sprang upon the ice itself, bidding the boot-steerer to wait for him. A shout broke out of the lips of the young captain the instant he was erect on the ice. There lay the schooner, the Martha's Vineyard craft, within half a mile of him, in plain sight, and in as plain jeopardy. She was jammed, with every prospect, as Roswell thought, of being crushed, ere she could get free from the danger.

CHAPTER XVI.

"A sculler's notch in the stern he made,
An oar he shaped of the battle blade;
Then sprung to his seat with a lightsome leap,
And launched afar on the calm, blue deep."
—THE CULPRIT FAY.

ROSWELL was hardly on the ice before a sound of a most portentous sort reached his ear. He knew at once that the field had been rent in twain by outward pressure, and that some new change was to occur that might release or might destroy the schooner. He was on the point of springing forward in order to join Daggett, when a call from the boat arrested his steps.

"These here fields are coming together, Captain Gar'ner, and our boat will soon be crushed unless we get it out of the water."

Sure enough, a single glance behind him sufficed to assure the young master of the truth of this statement. The field he was on was slowly swinging, bringing its western margin in close contact with the eastern edge of the floe that lay within it. The movement could be seen merely by the closing of the channel though which the boat had come, and by the cracking and crushing of the ice on the edges of the two fields. So tremendous was the pressure, however, that cakes as large as a small house were broken off, and forced upward on the surface of the field, or ground into small fragments, as it might be under the vise of a power hitherto unknown to the spectators. Slow as was the movement of the floe, it was too fast to allow of delay; and, finding a suitable place, the boat was hauled up, and put in security on the floe that lay nearest the schooner.

"This may give us a long drag to get back into the water, Stimson, and a night out of our bunks," said Roswell, looking about him, as soon as the task was achieved.

"I do not know that, sir," was the answer. "It seems to me that the floe has parted alongside of them rocks, and if so-be that should turn out to be the case, the whull on us, schooner, boat, and all hands, may drift into the bay; for that there is a current setting from this quarter up toward our island, I'm sartain of, by the feel of my oar, as we come along."

"It may be so; the currents run all manner of ways, and field ice may pass the shoals, though a berg never can. I do not remember, nevertheless, to have ever seen even a floe within the group—nothing beyond large cakes that have got adrift by some means or other."

"I have, sir, though only once. A few days a'ter we got in, when I was ship-keeper, and all hands was down under the rocks of the north end, a field come in at the northern entrance of the bay and went out at the southern. It might have been a league athwart it, and it drifted, as a body might say, as if it had some one aboard to give it the right sheer. Touch it did at the south cape, but just winding as handy as a craft could have done it, in a good tide's way, out to sea it went ag'in, bound to the south pole for-ti-'now."

"Well, this is good news, and may be the means of saving the Vineyard craft in the end. We do seem to be setting bodily into the bay, and if we can only get clear of that island, I do not see what is to hinder it. Here is a famous fellow of a mountain to the northward, coming down before the wind, as one might say, and giving us a cant into the passage. I should think that chap must produce some sort of a change, whether it be for better or worse."

"Ay, ay, sir," put in Thompson, who acted as a boat-steerer at need, "he may do just that, but it is all he can do. Mr. Green and I sounded out from the cove for a league or more, a few days since, and we found less than twenty fathoms, as far as we went. That chap up to the nor'ard there draws something like a hundred fathoms, if he draws an inch. He shows more above water than a first-rate's truck."

"That does he, and a good deal to spare. Thompson, do you and Todd remain here, and look after the boat, while the rest of us will shape our course for the schooner. She seems to be in a wicked berth, and 'twill be no more than neighborly to try to get her out of it."

Truly enough might Roswell call the berth of the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard by any expressive name that implied danger. When the party reached her, they found the situation of that vessel to be as follows: She had been endeavoring to work her way through a passage between two large fields, when she found the ice closing, and that she was in great danger of being "nipped." Daggett was a man of fertile resources and great decision of character. Perceiving that escape was impossible, all means of getting clear being rendered useless by the floes seen touching, both before and behind him, he set about adopting the means most likely to save his vessel. Selecting a spot where a curve, in the margin of the field to leeward, promised temporary security, at least, he got his vessel into it, anchored fast to the floe. Then he commenced cutting away the ice, by means of axes first, and of saws afterward, in the hope that he might make such a cavity as, by its size and shape, would receive the schooner's hull, and prevent her destruction. For several hours had he and his people been at this work, when, to their joy, as well as to their great astonishment, they were suddenly joined by Roswell and his party. The fact was, that so intently had every one of the Vineyard men's faculties been absorbed by their own danger, and so much was each individual occupied by his own duty, that not a man among them had seen the boat, or even any of the crew, until Gardiner called out to Daggett as he approached, announcing his presence by his voice.

"This is good fortune, truly, Captain Gar'ner," said Daggett, shaking his brother master cordially by the hand; "good fortune, do I call it! I was satisfied that I should fall in with you somewhere about this group of islands, for they lie just about where my late uncle had given us reason to suppose some good sealing-ground might be met with; but I did not hope to see you this morning. You observe our position, Captain Gar'ner; there is every prospect of a most awful nip!"

"There is, indeed, though I see you have been making some provision for it. What luck have you had in digging a slip to let the schooner into?"

"Well, we might have had worse, though better would have been more agreeable. It's plain sailing, so long as we can work above water, and you see we've cleared a fine berth for the craft, down to the water's edge; but, below that, 'tis blind work and slow. The field is some thirty feet thick, and sawing through it is out of the question. The most we can do is to get off pieces diagonally. I am not without hopes that we have done enough of this to make a wedge on which the schooner will rise, if pressed hard on her off-side. I have heard of such things, Captain Gar'ner, though I cannot say I ever saw it."

"It's a ticklish business to trust to such a protector; still a great deal must be gained by cutting away so much of this upper ice, and it is possible your schooner may be lifted, as you seem to expect. Has anything been done to strengthen the craft inboard?"

"Not as yet; though I've thought of that, too. But what is the stoutest ship that ever floated against the pressure of such an enormous field of ice? Had we not better keep cutting away?"

"You can continue to work the saw and the axes, but I will give an eye to strengthening the craft inboard. Just point out the spars and plank you can

spare, and we'll see what can be done. At any rate, my lads, you can now work with the certainty that your lives are safe. My schooner lies about six leagues from you, as safely moored as if she lay in a dock. Come, Captain Daggett, let me see your spare spars and plank."

Great encouragement it certainly was to these mariners, so far from home, and in their imminently perilous condition, to know that a countryman and a friend was so near them to afford shelter and protection. The American sailor is not a cheering animal, like his English relative, but he quite as clearly understands what ought to be received with congratulation as those who are apt to make more noise. The Vineyard men, in particular, were habitually quiet and thoughtful, there being but one seaman in the craft who did not husband his lay and look forward to meet the wants of a future day. This is the result of education, men usually becoming quiet as they gain ideas, and feel that the tongue has been given to us in order to communicate them to our fellows. Still the joy at receiving this unlooked-for assistance was great among the Vineyard men, and each party went to work with activity and zeal.

The task of Roswell Gardiner was inboard, while that of Daggett and his men continued to be on the ice. The latter resumed the labor of cutting and sawing the field, and of getting up fenders, or skids, to protect the inner side of their vessel from the effects of a "nip." As for Gardiner, he set about his self-assumed duty with great readiness and intelligence. His business was to strengthen the craft by getting supports up in her hold. This was done without much difficulty, all the upper part of the hold being clear and easily come at. Spars were cut to the proper length, plank were placed in the broadest part of the vessel, opposite to each other, and the spars were wedged in carefully, extending from side to side, so as to form a great additional support to the regular construction of the schooner. In little more than an hour, Roswell had his task accomplished, while Daggett did not see that he could achieve much more himself. They met on the ice to consult and to survey the condition of things around them.

The outer field had been steadily encroaching upon the inner, breaking the edges of both, until the points of junction were to be traced by a long line of fragments forced upward, and piled high in the air. Open spaces, however, still existed, owing to irregularities in the outlines of the two floes; and Daggett hoped that the little bay into which he had got his schooner might not be entirely closed, ere a shift of wind, or a change in the tides, might carry away the causes of the tremendous pressure that menaced his security. It is not easy for those who are accustomed to look at natural objects in their more familiar aspects, fully to appreciate the vast momentum of the weight that was now drifting slowly down upon the schooner. The only ray of hope was to be found in the deficiency in one of the two great requisites of such a force. Momentum being *weight* multiplied into *velocity*, there were some glimpses visible, of a nature to produce a slight degree of expectation that the last might yet be resisted. The movement was slow, but it was absolutely grand, by its steadiness and power. Any one who has ever stood on a lake or river shore, and beheld the undeviating force with which a small cake of ice crumbles and advances before a breeze, or in a current, may form some idea of the majesty of the movement of a field of ice leagues in diameter, and which was borne upon by a gale of the ocean, as well as by currents, and by the weight of drifting icebergs from without. It is true that the impetus came principally from a great distance, and could scarcely be detected or observed by those around the schooner; still, these last were fully aware of the whole character of the danger, which each minute appeared to render more and more imminent and imposing. The two fields were obviously closing still, and that with a resistless power that boded destruction to the unfortunate vessel. The open water near her was already narrowed to a space that half an hour might suffice to close entirely.

"Have you set that nearest island by compass, Daggett?" asked Roswell Gardiner, as soon as he had taken a good look around him. "To me it seems that it bears more to the eastward than it did an hour since. If this should be true, our inner field here must have a very considerable westerly set."

"In which case we may still hope to drift clear," returned Daggett, springing on board the schooner, and running aft to the binnacle, Roswell keeping close at his side. "By George! it is as you say; the bearings of that island are altered at least two points!"

"In which case our drift has exceeded a league—Ha! what noise is that? Can it be an eruption of the volcano?"

Daggett, at first, was inclined to believe it was a sound produced by some of the internal convulsions of the earth, which within, as if in mockery of the chill scene that prevailed without, was a raging volcano, the fierce heats of which found vent at the natural chimneys produced by its own efforts. This opinion, however, did not last long, and he gave expression to his new thoughts in his answer.

"'Tis the ice," he said. "I do believe the pressure has caused the fields to part on the rocks of that island. If so, our leeward floe may float away, as fast as the weather field approaches."

"Hardly," said Roswell, gazing intently toward the nearest island; "hardly; for the most weatherly of the two will necessarily get the force of the wind and the impetus of those bergs first, and make the fastest drift. It may lessen the violence of the nip, but I do not think it will avert it altogether."

This opinion of Gardiner's fully described all that subsequently occurred. The outer floe continued its inroads on the inner, breaking up the margins of both, until the channel was so nearly closed as to bring the field from which the danger was most apprehended in absolute contact with the side of the schooner. When the margin of the outer floe first touched the bilge of the schooner, it was at the precise spot where the vessel had just been fortified within. Fenders had also been provided without, and there was just a quarter of a minute, during which the two captains hoped that these united means of defense might enable the craft to withstand the pressure. This delusion lasted but a moment, however, the cracking of timbers letting it be plainly seen that the force was too great to be resisted. For another quarter of a minute the two masters held their breath, expecting to see the deck rise beneath their feet, as the ice rose along the points of contact between the floes. Such, in all probability, would have been the result, had not the pressure brought about another change, that was quite as much within the influence of the laws of mechanical forces, though not so much expected. Owing to the wedge-like form of the vessel's bottom, as well as to the circumstance that the ice of the outer floe had a similar shape, projecting beneath the schooner's keel, the craft was lifted bodily, with an upward jerk, as if she were suddenly released from some imprisoning power. Released she was, indeed, and that most opportunely, for another half minute would have seen her ribs broken in, and the schooner a mangled wreck. As she now rose, Roswell gave vent to his delight in a loud cry, and all hands felt that the occurrence might possibly save them. The surge upward was fearful, and several of the men were thrown off their feet; but it effectually released the schooner from the nip, laying her gradually up in the sort of dock that her people had been so many hours preparing for her reception. There she lay, inclining a little, partly on her bilge, or sewed, as seamen term it, when a vessel gets a list from touching the ground and being left by the tide, neither quite upright, nor absolutely on her beam-ends.

No sooner was the vessel thus docked, than all apprehension of receiving further injury from the outer floe ceased. It might force the schooner altogether on the inner field, driving the vessel before it, as an avalanche of mud in the Alps is known to force cottages and hamlets in its front; but it could no longer "nip" it.

It did not appear probable to the two masters, however, that the vessel would be forced from its present berth, the rending and cracking of the ice sensibly diminishing, as the two floes came closer and closer together. Nor was this all: it was soon very obvious that the inner field was drifting, with an increased motion, into the bay, while the larger, or outer floe, seemed to hang, from some cause or other. Of the fact there was soon no doubt, the fissure beginning to open, as slowly and steadily as it had closed, but noiselessly, and without any rending of the ice.

"We shall get you clear, Daggett! we shall get you clear!" cried Roswell, with hearty good-will, forgetting in that moment of generous effort, all feelings of competition and rivalry. "I know what you are after, my good fellow—have understood it from the first. Yonder high land is the spot you seek; and along the north shore of that island are elephants, lions, dogs, bears, and other animals, to fill up all the craft that ever came out of the Vineyard!"

"This is hearty, Gar'ner," returned the other, giving his brother master a most cordial shake of the hand, "and it's just what I like. Sealing is a sociable business, and a craft should never come alone into these high latitudes. Accidents will happen to the most prudent man living, as you see by what has just befallen me; for, to own the truth, we've had a narrow chance of it!"

The reader will remember that all which Daggett now said, was uttered by a man who saw his vessel lying on the ice, with a list that rendered it somewhat difficult to move about on her deck, and still in circumstances that would have caused half the navigators of this world to despair. Such was not the fact with Daggett, however. Seven thousand miles from home, alone, in an unknown sea, and uncertain of ever finding the place he sought, this man had picked his way among mountains and fields of ice, with perhaps less hesitation and reluctance than a dandy would encounter the perils of a crossing, when the streets were a little moistened by rain. Even then, with his vessel literally shelved on the ice, certain that she had been violently nipped, he was congratulating himself on reaching a sealing ground from which he could never return without encountering all the same dangers over again. As for Roswell, he laughed a little at the other's opinion of the sealing business, for he was morally certain the Vineyard man would have kept the secret, had it been in his possession alone.

"Well, well, we'll forget the past," he said, "all but what we've done to help one another. You stood by me off Hatteras, and I've been of some service to you here. You know how it is in our calling, Daggett; first come, first served. I got here first, and have had the cream of the business for this season; though I do not by any means wish to be understood as saying that you are too late."

"I hope not, Gar'ner. 'Twould be vexatious to have all this risk and trouble for nothing. How much ile have you stowed?"

"All my ground tier and a few riders. It is with the skins that we are doing the best business."

Daggett's eyes fairly snapped at this announcement, which aroused all his professional ambition, to say nothing of that propensity to the "root of all evil," which had become pretty thoroughly incorporated with his moral being, by dint of example, theory, and association. We have frequently had occasion to remark how much more "enjoyable," for the intellectual and independent, is a country on the decline, than a country on the advance. The one is accumulating that wealth which the other has already possessed and improved; and men cease to dwell so much on riches in their inmost souls, when the means of obtaining them would seem to have got beyond their reach. This is one of the secrets of the universal popularity of Italy with the idle and educated; though the climate, and the monuments, and the recollections, out of doubt, contribute largely to its charms. Nevertheless, man, as a rule, is far more removed from the money-getting mania in

Italy than in almost any other portion of the Christian world; and this merely because the time of her wealth and power has gone by, leaving in its train a thousand fruits that would seem to be the most savory, as the stem on which they grew would appear to be approaching its decay. Neither on Martha's Vineyard, however, nor in any part of the Great Republic, indeed, has this waning season yet commenced, and the heart of man is still engrossed with those desires that are to produce the means which are to lay the foundations for the enjoyment of generations to come.

"That's luck, indeed, for a craft so early in the season," returned Daggett, when his eyes had done snapping. "Are the critturs getting to be wild and skeary?"

"Not more so than the day we began upon them. I have taken the greatest care to send none but my most experienced hands out to kill and skin, and their orders have been rigid to give as little alarm as possible. If you wish to fill up, I would advise you to take the same precautions, for the heel of the season is beginning to show itself."

"I will winter here, but I get a full craft," said Daggett, with a resolute manner, if not absolutely serious in what he said. "Trouble enough have I had to find the group, and we Vineyard men don't relish the idee of being outdone."

"You would be done up, my fine fellow," answered Roswell, laughing, "did you attempt to pass a winter here. The *Sea Lion* of Humses's Hull would not herself keep you in fuel, and you would have to raft it off next summer on your casks, or remain here forever."

"I suppose a body might expect to see you back again, another season," observed Daggett, glancing meaningly toward his companion, as if he had seriously revolved so desperate a plan in his mind. "'Tisn't often that a sealer lets a station like that you've described drop out of his recollection in a single v'y'ge."

"I may be back or I may not," said Roswell, just then remembering Mary, and wondering if she would continue to keep him any longer in suspense, should he return successful from his present adventure: "that will depend on others more than on myself. I wish, however, now we are both here, and there can no longer be any 'hide and go seek' between us, that you would tell me how you came to know anything about this cluster of islands, or of the seals then and there to be found?"

"You forget my uncle, who died on Oyster Pond, and whose effects I crossed over to claim?"

"I remember him very well—saw him often while living, and helped to bury him when dead."

"Well, our information came from him. He threw out several hints consarning sealing grounds aboard the brig in which he came home; and you needn't be told, Gar'ner, that a hint of that kind is sartain to find its way through all the ports down east. But hearing that there was new sealing ground wasn't knowing where to find it. I should have been at a loss, wasn't it for the spot on my uncle's chart that had been rubbed over lately, as I concluded, to get rid of some of his notes. You know, as well as I do, that the spot was in this very latitude and longitude, and so I came here to look for the much-desired land."

"And you have undertaken such an outfit, and come this long distance into an icy sea, on information as slight as this!" exclaimed Roswell, astonished at this proof of sagacity and enterprise, even in men who are renowned for scenting dollars from pole to pole.

"On this, with a few hints picked up, here and there, among some of the old gentleman's papers. He was fond of scribbling, and I have got a sort of a chart that he scratched on a leaf of his Bible, that was made to represent this very group, as I can now see."

"Then you could have no occasion for the printed chart, with the mark of obliteration on it, and did not come here on that authority after all."

"There you're wrong, Captain Gar'ner. The chart of the group had no latitude or longitude, but just placed each island

with its bearings and distances from the other islands. It was no help in finding the place, which might be in one hemisphere as well as the other."

"It was, then, the mark of the obliteration——"

"*Marks*, if you please, Captain Gar'ner," interrupted the other, significantly. "My uncle talked a good deal aboard of that brig about other matters besides sealing. We think several matters have been obliterated from the old chart, and we intend to look 'em all up. It's our right, you know, seeing that the old man was Vineyard-born, and we are his nearest of kin."

"Certainly," rejoined Roswell, laughing again, but somewhat more faintly than before. "Every man for himself in this world is a good maxim; it being pretty certain if we do not take care of ourselves, no one will take care of us."

"Yes, sir," said Stimson, who was standing near; "there is One to care for every hair of our heads, however forgetful and careless we may be ourselves. Wasn't it for this, Captain Gar'ner, there's many a craft that comes into these seas that would never find its way out of 'em; and many a bold sailor, with a heart boiling over with fun and frolic, that would be frozen to an icicle every year!"

Gardiner felt the justice of this remark, and easily pardoned its familiarity for its truth. In these sealers the discipline is by no means of that distant and military or naval character that is found in even an ordinary merchantman. As every seaman has an interest in the result of the voyage, some excuse was made for this departure from the general usage; and this familiarity itself never exceeded the bounds that were necessary to the observance of duty.

"Ay, ay," returned Roswell, smiling, "in one sense you are right enough; but Captain Daggett and myself were speaking of human affairs, as human affairs are carried on. Is not this inner field drifting fast away from the outer, Daggett? If so, we shall go directly into the bay!"

It was as Gardiner thought. By some means that were not apparent, the floes were now actually separating, and at a rate of movement which much exceeded that of their junction. All idea of further danger from the outer field disappeared, as a matter of course.

"It's so, Captain Gar'ner," said Stimson, respectfully, but with point; "and who and what brought it about for our safety and the preservation of this craft? I just ventur' to ask that question, sir."

"It may be the hand of Providence, my good fellow; for I very frankly own I can see no direct physical cause. Nevertheless, I fancy it would be found that the tides or currents have something to do with it, if the truth could be come at."

"Well, sir, and who causes the tides and currents to run, this-a-way and that-a-way?"

"There you have me, Stephen; for I never could get hold of the clew to their movements at all," answered Roswell, laughing. "There is a reason for it all, I dare say, if one could only find it out. Captain Daggett, it is high time to look after the safety of your schooner. She ought to be in the cove before night sets in, since the ice has found its way into the bay."

This appeal produced a general movement. By this time the two fields were a hundred fathoms asunder; the smaller, or that on which the vessel lay, drifting quite fast into the bay, under the joint influences of wind and current; while the larger floe had clearly been arrested by the islands. This smaller field was much lessened in surface, in consequence of having been broken at the rocks, though the fragment that was thus cut off was more than a league in diameter, and of a thickness that exceeded many yards.

As for the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard, she was literally shelved, as has been said. So irresistible had been the momentum of the great floe, that it lifted her out of the water as two or three hands would run up a bark canoe on a gravelly beach. This lifting process had, very fortunately for the craft, been effected by an application of force from below, in a wedge-like manner, and by bringing the

fenses of the vessel to meet
Consequently, no essential
en done the vessel in thus
ıer screw-dock.
could get the craft *off* as
was got *on*," observed Dag-
ne and Roswell Gardiner stood
ing at the schooner's situation, "it would be but a light job. But, as it is, she lies on ice at least twenty feet thick, and ice that seems as solid as flint!"

"We know it is not quite as hard as that, Daggett," was Roswell's reply; "for our saws and axes make great havoc in it, when we can fairly get at it."

"If one *could* get fairly at it! But here you see, Gar'ner, everything is under water, and an ax is next to useless. Nor can the saws be used with much advantage on ice so thick."

"There is no help for it but hard work and great perseverance. I would advise that a saw be set at work at each end of the schooner, allowing a little room in case of accidents, and that we weaken the foundation by two deep cuts. The weight of the vessel will help us, and in time she will settle back into her 'native element,' as the newspapers have it."

There was, indeed, no other process that promised success, and the advice of Gardiner was followed. In the course of the next two hours deep cuts were made with the saws, which were pushed so low as to reach quite to the bottom of the cake. This could be done only by what the sailors called "jury-handles," or spars secured to the plates. The water offered the principal obstacle, for that lay on the shelf at least five feet deep. Perseverance and ingenuity, however, finally achieved their aim. A cracking was heard, the schooner slowly righted, and settled off into the sea again, as easily and harmlessly as if scientifically launched. The fenders protected her sides and copper, though the movement was little more than slowly sinking on the fragment of the cake, which, by means of the cuts, had been gradually so much reduced as to be unable to uphold so great a weight. It was merely reversing the process of breaking the camel's back, by laying the last feather on his load.

This happy conclusion to several hours of severe toil, occurred just as the field had drifted abreast of the cove, and was about the center of the bay. Hazard came up also at that point, on his return from the volcano, altering his course a little to speak the strangers. The report of the mate concerning his discoveries was simple and brief. There was a volcano, and one in activity; but it had nothing remarkable about it. No seal were seen, and there was little to reward one for crossing the bay. Sterility, and a chill grandeur, were the characteristics of all that region; and these were not wanting to any part of the group. Just as the sun was setting, Gardiner piloted his companion into the cove; and the two *Sea Lions* were moored amicably side by side, and that too at a spot where thousands of the real animals were to be found within a league.

CHAPTER XVII.

"The morning air blows fresh on him;
The waves dance gladly in his sight;
The sea-birds call, and wheel, and skim—
O blessed morning light!"—DANA.

THE very day succeeding the arrival of the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard, even while his mate was clearing the vessel, Daggett had a gang on the north shore, killing and skinning. As Roswell's rules were rigidly observed, no other change was produced by this accession to the force of the sealers, than additional slaughter. Many more seals were killed, certainly, but all was done so quietly that no great alarm was awakened among the doomed animals themselves. One great advantage was obtained by the arrival of the new party that occasioned a good deal of mirth at first, but which, in the end, was found to be of great importance to the progress of the work. Daggett had taken to pieces and brought with him the running part of a common country wagon, which was soon found of vast service in transporting the skins and blubber across the rocks. The

wheels were separated, leaving them in pairs, and each axle was loaded with a freight that a dozen men would hardly have carried, whereas two or three hands would drag in the load, with an occasional lift from other gangs, to get them up a height, or over a cleft. This portion of the operation was found to work admirably, owing in a great measure to the smooth surfaces of the rocks; and unquestionably, these wheels advanced the business of the season at least a fortnight; —Gardiner thought a month. It rendered the crews better natured, too, much diminishing their toil, and sending them to their bunks at night in a far better condition for rest than they otherwise could have been.

Just one month, or four weeks to a day, after the second schooner got in, it being Sunday of course, Gardiner and Dagget met on the platform of a perfectly even rock that lay stretched for two hundred yards directly beneath the house. It was in the early morning. Notwithstanding there was a strong disposition to work night and day on the part of the newcomers, Roswell's rule of keeping the Sabbath as a day of rest had prevailed, and the business of washing, scrubbing, and shaving had just commenced. As for the two masters, they required fewer ablutions than their men, had risen earlier, and were already dressed for the day.

"To-morrow will be the first day of February," said Daggett, when the salutations of the morning were passed, "and I was calculating my chances of getting full this season. You will be full this week, I conclude, Gar'ner?"

"We hope to be so, by the middle of it," was the answer. "I think the seal are getting to be much shyer than they were, and I am afraid we shall demonstrate that 'the more haste is the worse speed.'"

"What is that to you?" returned Daggett, quickly. "Of course you will sail for home as soon as you can get off."

Gardiner did not like the "of course," which was indirectly saying what the other would do himself under similar circumstances. Still, it caused no difference in his own decision, which had been made up under the influence of much reflection and of a great deal of good feeling.

"I shall do no such thing, Captain Daggett," was the answer. "I do not fancy the idea of leaving a fellow-creature, a countryman—nay, I might say, a neighbor, on this lone spot, with the uncertainty of his ever getting out of it. If you can come to some understanding with my officers and crew, I will keep the schooner here until we are both full, and ready to sail in company."

"In which case you would nat'rally ask a lay for yourself?"

"Naturally, perhaps, I might," returned Roswell, smiling, "though positively, I shall not. Not one of us in the cabin will look for any other advantage than your good company. I have talked this matter over with my mates, and they say that the advantage of having a consort in getting through the ice is sufficient to justify us in holding on two or three weeks longer. With the men, it will be a little different, perhaps; and they will require some pay. The poor fellows live by their hands, and what their hands do they will expect to be compensated for."

"They shall have good lays, depend on it. As for yourself, Captain Gar'ner, I trust my owners will not forget to do what is right, if we ever get home, and meet with luck in the market."

"Never fear for me, Daggett. I look for my reward in the bright eyes and pleasant smiles of as excellent a girl as Long Island can produce. Mary never fails to reward me in that way whenever I do right. It *is* right to stand by you just now—to do as I would be done by; and I'll do it. Set the thing down as decided, but make your bargain with my men. And now, Daggett, what say you to climbing yonder mountain to-day, by way of getting a good survey of our territories, as well as to take a look at the state of the ice?"

Daggett assented very cheerfully, his mind being greatly relieved by this assurance of standing by him, on the part of Roswell, for he had been undecided whether to remain after the departure of

the other schooner or not. All was now clear to him, however, and the two masters made their preparations to ascend the mountain as soon as they had breakfasted. Stimson was summoned to be of the party, his officer having got to be accustomed to, and desirous of his company.

For the first two hours after quitting the house, Gardiner, Daggett, and the boat-steerer were busily employed in working their way across the broken surface of the island, to the base of the cone-like pinnacle that formed the apex of all. There they rested and took a little refreshment, conversing the while on the state of the ice in the offing, so far as the last could be seen from their present elevation.

"We shall have a sharp hill to climb, should we succeed in getting up here," observed Roswell, "though the rocks appear to be quite clear of snow just now."

"Just now, or never. This is the antarctic dog-days, Gar'ner," answered Daggett, laughing, and we must make the most of them. A man can move about without his pea-jacket at noonday, and that is something gained; for, I have heard of ice making in the bays, even at midsummer."

"We are not in a high enough latitude for that, thank heaven, though pretty well south, too. This is our harvest-time, sure enough, and we had better look to it."

As Gardiner said this, the eyes of all three were turned on the sterile scene around them. The island was not absolutely destitute of vegetation, as is the case a few degrees further south; but it might be said to be nearly so. A few stunted plants were to be seen in the fissures of the rocks, and a little soil had been made, seemingly by the crumbling of the stones, in which a wiry grass occasionally showed itself. As for the mountain, however, it was mostly bare; and when our party began to climb, the ascent was not only difficult, but in places dangerous. Roswell had foreseen this, and he had made a provision accordingly. In addition to his lance, used as a leaping-staff and walking-pike, each man had a small coil of ratlin-stuff thrown over his shoulder, in order to help him in difficult places, or enable him to help his companions. It was in the descent chiefly that these ropes were expected to be of service, though their utility was made apparent ere the three reached the summit. The ascent of a mountain a thousand feet in height is no great exploit under ordinary circumstances. Even when there are precipitous cliffs, gorges, ravines, and broken masses, youth, activity, and courage will commonly overcome all the difficulties, placing the foot of man on eminences that Nature would appear to have intended solely for the dominion of the goat. Thus it did turn out with the three sealers, all of whom stood on the bald cap of that mountain, after a vigorous and somewhat hazardous ascent, that occupied rather more than an hour. They had greatly aided each other in achieving their purpose, to be sure; and the ratlin-stuff was found of use on more than one occasion.

An extraordinary, and, considering the accessories, a most brilliant view, rewarded the adventurers. But, after a few minutes passed in pure admiration of what they beheld, the minds of all three adverted to the parts which gave such unusual splendor to the panorama. Icebergs were visible on all sides of them, the great bay excepted; and the group was surrounded by them, in a way that would seem to proclaim a blockade. At that season, the south winds prevailed, though changes were frequent and sudden, and the vast frozen fleet was drifting north. Gardiner saw that the passage by which he had brought in his schooner was now completely closed, and that the only means of exit from the bay was by its northern outlet. The great depth of the bergs still prevented their coming within the cluster of islands, while their number and size completely stopped the floes from passing.

To the northward, the sea was much more open. Gardiner and Daggett both thought, as they gazed in that direction, that it would be easy enough to take a vessel through the difficulties of the navigation, and that a good run of eight-and-

forty hours would carry her quite beyond the crowded ice. This sight awakened some regrets in the two masters, that they were not then in a condition to depart.

"I am almost sorry that we have made a holiday of the Sunday," said Daggett, seating himself on a point of rock, to get a little rest after so fatiguing an ascent. "Every minute of time is precious to men in our situation."

"Every minute of time is precious to all men, Captain Daggett, in another and a still more important sense, if they did but know it," put in Stimson, with a zealous freedom, and a Christian's earnestness.

"I understand you, Stephen, and will not gainsay it. But a sealin' v'y'ge is no place, after all, for a man to give himself up to Sabbaths and religion."

"All places are good, sir, and all hours Sabbaths, when the heart is in the true state. God is on this naked rock, as he is on the Vineyard; and a thought, or a syllable, in His praise, on this mountain, are as pleasant to Him as them that arise from churches and priests."

"I believe it is, at least, a mistake in policy to give the men no day of rest," said Roswell, quietly. "Though not prepared to carry matters as far as my friend Stephen here, I agree with him entirely in *that*."

"And not in believing, sir, that the Spirit of God is on this island?"

"In that too, certainly. Neither Captain Daggett nor myself will be disposed to dispute either of these two propositions, I think, when we come to reflect on them. A day of rest would seem to be appointed by Nature; and I make no doubt we have filled up all the sooner for having observed one. Seamen have so many calls on their time which cannot be neglected, that it is unwise in them to increase the number unnecessarily."

"This is not the spirit, Captain Gar'ner, I'm sorry to say, in which we should keep our day of rest, though it is well that we keep it at all. I'm no stickler for houses and congregations, though they are good enough in their times and seasons; for every man has a tabernacle in his own heart, if he's disposed to worship."

"And if any place on earth can particularly incline one to worship God, surely it must be some such spot as this!" exclaimed Roswell, with a degree of fervor it was not usual for him to exhibit. "Never in my life have my eyes seen a sight as remarkable and as glorious as this!"

Well might our young mariner thus exclaim. The day was fine for the region, but marked by the caprice and changeful light of high latitudes. There was mist in places, and flurries of snow were to be seen to the southward, while the ocean to the northward of the group was glittering under the brightness of an unclouded sun. It was the mixed character of this scene that rendered it so peculiar, while its grandeur, sublimity, and even beauty, were found in its vastness, its noble though wild accessories, its frozen and floating mountains, glowing in prismatic light, and the play of summer on the features of an antarctic view.

"'Tis a remarkable spot, as no one can deny," answered Daggett; "but I like its abundance of seal the most of all. I cannot say I have much taste for sights, unless they bring the promise of good profit with them. We Vineyarders live in a small way, and are not rich enough to take delight in landscapes."

"Serve God, and reverence His holy name," said Stimson, earnestly, "and all places will be good to look upon. I have been on the Vineyard in my time, and have never found any difference as to the spot, so long as the heart is right."

"A poor man must work," answered Daggett, dropping his eyes from the more distant and gorgeous views of the drifting ice-mountains, to the rocky shore, that was still frequented by thousands of seals, some of the largest of which might be seen, even from that elevation, waddling about; "ay, a poor man must work, Sundays or no Sundays; and he who would make his hay, must do it while the sun shines. I like meetin'-goin' at the right place, and sealin' when sealin' ought to be done. This day is lost, I fear, and I hope we shall not have reason to regret it."

Stimson did not abandon what he con-

ceived to be his duty, but answered this cold, worldly spirit in the best manner his uncultivated speech enabled him to do. But his words were thrown away on Daggett. The lust of gold was strong within him; and while that has full dominion over the heart it is vain to expect that any purely spiritual fruits will ripen there. Daggett was an instance of what, we fear, many thousands resembling him might be found, up and down the land, of a man energetic by temperament, industrious by habit, and even moderate in his views, but whose whole existence is concentrated in the accumulation of property. Born poor, and in a state of society in which no one other generally recognized mode of distinction is so universally acknowledged as that of the possession of money, it is not surprising that a man of his native disposition should early bend all his faculties to this one great object. He was not a miser, like Deacon Pratt, for he could spend freely, on occasion, and perfectly understood the necessity of making liberal outfits to insure ample returns; but he lived for little else than for gain. What such a man might have become, under more favorable auspices, and with different desires instilled into his youthful mind, it is not easy to say; it is only certain that, as he was, the steel-trap is not quicker to spring at the touch, than he was to arouse all his manifold energies at the hopes or promise of profit. As his whole life had been passed in one calling, it was but natural that his thoughts should most easily revert to the returns that calling had so often given. He never dreamed of speculations, knew nothing of stocks, had no concerns with manufactures in cotton or wool, nor had any other notion of wealth than the possession of a good farm on the Vineyard, a reasonable amount of money "at use," certain interests in coasters, whalers and sealers, and a sufficiency of household effects, and this in a very modest way, to make himself and family comfortable. Notwithstanding this seeming moderation, Daggett was an intensely covetous man; but his wishes were limited by his habits.

While one of the masters of the sealing crafts was drawing these pictures, in his imagination, of wealth after his manner, very different were the thoughts of the other. Roswell's fancy carried him far across that blue and sparkling ocean, northward, to Oyster Pond, and Deacon Pratt's homestead, and to Mary. He saw the last in her single-hearted simplicity, her maiden modesty, her youthful beauth — nay, even in her unyielding piety; for, singular as it may seem, Gardiner valued his mistress so much the more for that very faith to which, in his own person, he laid no claim. Irreligious he was not, himself, though sceptical on the one great tenet of Christianity. But, in Mary, it struck him it was right that she should believe that which she had been so sedulously taught; for he did not at all fancy those inquiring minds, in the other sex, that lead their possessors in quest of novelties and paradoxes. In this humor, then, the reader will not be surprised to hear that he imagined the deacon's niece in her most pleasing attributes, and bedecked her with all those charms that render maidens pleasant to youthful lovers. Had Mary been less devout, less fixed in her belief that Jesus was the Son of God, strange as it may seem, the sceptical young man would have loved her less.

And what was that rugged, uncultivated seaman, who stood near the two officers, thinking of all this time? Did he, too, bend his thoughts on love, and profit, and the pleasures of this world? Of love, most truly, was his heart full to overflowing; but it was the love of God, with that affection for all his creatures, that benevolence and faith, which glow as warmly in the hearts of the humblest and least educated, as in those of the great and learned. His mind was turned toward his Creator, and it converted the extraordinary view that lay before his sight into a vast, magnificent, gorgeous, though wild temple, for His worship and honor. It might be well for all of us occasionally to pause in our eager pursuit of worldly objects, and look around on the world itself, considering it as but a particle in the illimitable fields of crea-

tion—one among the many thousands of other known worlds, that have been set in their place in honor of the hand that made them. These brief but vivid glances at the immensity of the moral space which separates man from his Deity, have very healthful effects in inculcating that humility which is the stepping-stone of faith and love.

After passing an hour on the bald cap of the mountain, sometimes conversing, at others ruminating on the scene, a change in the weather induced our party to move. There had been flurries of snow visible all the morning, but it was in the distance, and among the glittering bergs. Once the volcano had thus been shut in from view; but now a driving cloud passed over the mountain itself, which was quickly as white as the pure element could make it. So heavy was the fall of snow, that it was soon impossible to see a dozen yards, and of course the whole of the plain of the island was concealed. At this most inauspicious moment, our adventurers undertook their descent.

It is always much less dangerous to mount an acclivity than to go down it. The upper progress is easily enough arrested, while that in the other direction is frequently too rapid to be under perfect command. Roswell felt the truth of this, and would have proposed a delay until the atmosphere became clear again, but it struck him that this was not likely to occur very soon. He followed Daggett, therefore, though reluctantly, and with due caution. Stimson brought up the rear.

For the first ten minutes our adventurers got along without any great difficulty. They found the precise point at which they had reached the summit of the mountain, and began to descend. It was soon apparent that great caution must be used, the snow rendering the footing slippery. Daggett, however, was a bold and hot-blooded man when in motion, and he preceded the party some little distance, calling out to those behind him to come on without fear. This the last did, though it was with a good deal more caution than was observed by their leader. At length all three reached a spot where it seemed they could not overcome the difficulties. Beneath them was the smooth face of a rock already covered with snow, while they could not see far enough in advance to ascertain in what this inclined plane terminated. Daggett, however, insisted that he knew the spot; that they had passed up it. There was a broad shelf a short distance below them, and once on that shelf, it would be necessary to make a considerable circuit in order to reach a certain ravine down which the path would be reasonably easy. All remembered the shelf and the ravine; the question was merely whether the first lay beneath them, and as near as Daggett supposed. A mistaken confidence beset the last, and he carried this feeling so far as to decline taking the end of a line which Roswell threw to him, but seated himself on the snow and slid downward, passing almost immediately out of sight.

"What has become of him?" demanded Roswell, endeavoring to pierce the air by straining his eyeballs. "He is not to be seen!"

"Hold on to the line, sir, and give me the other end of it; I will go and see," answered Stimson.

It being obviously the most hazardous to remain to the last, and descend without the support of one above him, Roswell acquiesced in this proposal, lowering the boat-steerer down the rock, until he too was hid from his sight. But, though out of sight in that dense snow-storm, Stimson was not so distant as to be beyond reach of the voice.

"Go more to the right, sir," called out the seaman, "and steady me with the line along with you."

This was done, the walking being sufficiently secure at the elevation where Roswell was. Presently, Stimson shook the line and called out again.

"That will do, Captain Gar'ner," he said. "I am on the shelf *now*, and have pretty good footing. Lay the line down on the snow, sir, and slide as slowly as you can; mind and keep close at its side. I'll stand by to fetch you up."

Gardiner understood all this perfectly,

and did as he was desired to do. By keeping near the line he reached the shelf precisely at the spot where Stimson was ready to meet him; the latter arresting his downward movement by throwing the weight of his own body forward to meet his officer. By such a precaution Roswell was stopped in time, else would he have gone over the shelf, and down a declivity that was so nearly perpendicular as to offer no means of arresting the movement.

"And what has become of Captain Daggett?" demanded Gardiner, as soon as he was on his feet again.

"I fear he has shot off the rock, sir," was the answer. "At the place where I reached this shelf, it was so narrow I could with great difficulty walk—could not, indeed, had not the line been there to steady me: and, judging from the marks in the snow, the poor man has gone down helpless!"

This was appalling intelligence to receive at such a time, and in such a place. But Roswell was not unmanned by it; on the contrary, he acted coolly, and with great judgment. Making a coil of the ratlin-stuff, he threw the line down until certain it reached bottom, at the distance of about six fathoms. Then he caused Stimson to brace himself firmly, holding on to the line, aided by a turn round a rise in the rock, and he boldly lowered himself down the precipice, reaching its base at about the distance he had calculated so to do.

It still snowed violently, the flakes being large, and eddying round the angles of the rocks in flurries so violent as, at moments, to confound all the senses of the young man. He was resolute, however, and bent on an object of humanity, as well as of good fellowship. Living or dead, Daggett must be somewhere on his present level; and he began to grope his way among the fragments of rock, eager and solicitous. The roaring of the wind almost prevented his hearing other sounds; though once or twice he heard, or fancied that he heard, the shouts of Stimson from above. Suddenly the wind ceased, the snow lessened in quantity, soon clearing away altogether; and the rays of the sun —and this in the dog-days of that region, be it remembered—fell bright and genial on the glittering scene. At the next instant, the eyes of Roswell fell on the object of his search.

Daggett had been carried over the narrow shelf on which Stimson landed, in consequence of his having no support, or any means of arresting his momentum. He did thrust forward his lance, or leaping-staff; but its point met nothing but air. The fall, however, was by no means perpendicular, several projections of the rocks helping to lessen it; though it is probable that the life of the unfortunate sealer was saved altogether by means of the lance. This was beneath him as he made his final descent, and he slid along it the whole length, canting him into a spot where was the only piece of stinted vegetation that was to be seen for a considerable distance. In consequence of coming down on a tolerably thick bunch of furze, the fall was essentially broken.

When Roswell reached his unfortunate companion, the latter was perfectly sensible and quite cool.

"God be thanked that you have found me, Gar'ner," he said; "at one time I had given it up."

"Thank God, also, that you are living, my friend," answered the other. "I expected only to find your body; but you do not seem to be much hurt."

"More than appears, Gar'ner; more than appears. My left leg is broken, certainly; and one of my shoulders pains me a good deal, though it is neither out of joint nor broken. This is a sad business for a sealing v'y'ge!"

"Give yourself no concern about your craft, Daggett—I will look to her and to your voyage."

"Will you stand by the schooner, Gar'ner?—Promise me that, and my mind will be at peace."

"I do promise. The two vessels shall stick together, at all events until we are clear of the ice."

"Ay, but that won't do. *My Sea Lion* must be filled up as well as your own. Promise me *that*."

"It shall be done, God willing. But here comes Stimson; the first thing will be to get you out of this spot."

Daggett was obviously relieved by Roswell's pledges; for amid the anguish and apprehension of his unexpected state, his thoughts had most keenly adverted to his vessel and her fortunes. Now that his mind was somewhat relieved on this score, the pains of his body became more sensibly felt. The situation of our party was sufficiently embarrassing. The leg of Daggett was certainly broken, a little distance above his ankle; and various bruises in other places gave notice of the existence of other injuries. To do anything with the poor man, lying where he was, was out of the question, however; and the first thing was to remove the sufferer to a more eligible position. Fortunately it was no great distance to the foot of the mountain, and a low, level piece of rock was accessible, by means of care and steady feet. Daggett was raised between Roswell and Stimson in a sitting attitude, and supporting himself by putting an arm around the neck of each. The legs hung down, the broken as well as the sound limb. To this accidental circumstance the sufferer was indebted to a piece of incidental surgery that proved of infinite service to him. While dangling in this manner the bone got into its place, and Daggett instantly became aware of that important fact, which was immediately communicated to Roswell. Of course the future mode of proceeding was regulated by this agreeable piece of information.

Sailors are often required to act as physicians, surgeons, and priests. It is not often that they excel in either capacity; but in consequence of the many things they are called to turn their hands to, it does generally happen that they get to possess a certain amount of address that renders them far more dexterous, in nearly everything they undertake, than the generality of those who are equally strangers to the particular act that is thus to be exercised. Roswell had set one or two limbs already, and had a tolerable notion of the manner of treating the case. Daggett was now seated on a rock at the base of the mountain, with his legs still hanging down, and his back supported by another rock. No sooner was he thus placed than Stimson was dispatched, post-haste, for assistance. His instructions were full, and the honest fellow set off at a rate that promised as early relief as the circumstances would at all allow.

As for our hero, he set about his most important office the instant Stimson left him. Daggett aided with his counsel, and a little by his personal exertions; for a seaman does not lie down passively, when anything can be done, even in his own case.

Baring the limb, Roswell soon satisfied himself that the bone had worked itself into place. Bandages were instantly applied to keep it there while splints were making. It was, perhaps, a little characteristic that Daggett took out his knife and aided in shaving down these splints to the necessary form and thickness. They were made out of the staff of the broken lance, and were soon completed. Roswell manifested a good deal of dexterity and judgment in applying the splints. The handkerchiefs were used to relieve the pressure in places, and rope-yarns from the ratlin-stuff furnished the means of securing everything in its place. In half an hour, Roswell had his job completed, and that before there was much swelling to interfere with him. As soon as the broken limb was thus attended to, it was carefully raised and laid upon the rock along with its fellow, a horizontal position being deemed better than one that was perpendicular.

Not less than four painful hours now passed ere the gang of hands from the vessels reached the base of the mountain. It came prepared, however, to transport the sufferer on a handbarrow that had been used in conveying the skins of seal across the rocks. On this barrow Daggett was now carefully placed, when four men lifted him up and walked away with him for a few hundred yards. These were then relieved by four more; and in this manner was the whole distance to the house passed over. The patient was put in his bunk, and some attention was

bestowed on his bruises and other injuries.

Glad enough was the sufferer to find himself beneath a roof, and in a room that had its comforts; or what were deemed comforts on a sealing voyage. As the men were in the dormitory very little of the time except at night, he was enabled to sleep; and Roswell had hopes, as he now told Stimson, that a month or six weeks would set the patient on his feet again.

"He has been a fortunate fellow, Stephen, that it was no worse," added Roswell on that occasion. "But for the luck which turned the lance-pole beneath him, every bone he has would have been broken."

"What you call *luck*, Captain Gar'ner, I call *Providence*," was Stephen's answer. "The great book tells us that not a sparrow shall fall without the eye of Divine Providence being on it."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Now far he sweeps, where scarce a summer smiles,
On Behring's rocks, or Greenland's naked isles;
Cold on his midnight watch the breezes blow,
From wastes that slumber in eternal snow,
And waft across the waves' tumultuous roar,
The wolf's long howl from Oonalaska's shore."
—CAMPBELL.

ROSWELL GARDINER set about his duties the succeeding day with a shade of deep reflection on his brow. A crisis had, indeed, come in his affairs, and it behooved him to look well to his proceedings. Daggett's presence on the island was no longer of any moment to himself or his owner, but there remained the secret of the key, and of the buried treasure. Should the two schooners keep together, how was he to acquit himself in that part of his duty, without admitting of a partnership, against which he knew that every fiber in the deacon's system, whether physical or moral, would revolt. Still, his word was pledged, and he had no choice but to remain and help fill up the rival *Sea Lion*, and trust to his own address in getting rid of her again, as the two vessels proceeded north.

The chief mate of Daggett's craft, though a good sealer, was an impetuous and reckless man, and had more than once found fault with the great precautions used, by the orders of Roswell. Macy, as the officer was called, was for making a regular onslaught upon the animals, slaying as many as they could at once, and then take up the business of curing and trying out as a regular job. He had seen such things done with success, and he believed it was the most secure mode of getting along. "Some of these fine mornings," as he expressed it, "Captain Gar'ner would turn out and find that his herd was off—gone to pasture in some other field." This was a view of the matter with which Roswell did not at all agree. His forbearing and cautious policy had produced excellent results so far, and he hoped it would continue so to do until both schooners were full. On the morning when the men next went forth, he as leader of both crews, therefore, our young master renewed his admonitions, pointing out to the newcomers, in particular, the great necessity there was of using forbearance, and not to alarm the seals more than the work indispensably required. The usual number of "Ay, ay's, sir!" were given in reply, and the gangs went along the rocks, seemingly in a good humor to obey these injunctions.

Circumstances, however, were by no means favorable to giving Roswell the same influence over the Vineyardmen as he possessed over his own crew. He was a young commander, and this was his first voyage in that capacity, as all well knew; then there had been rivalry and competition between the two crafts, which was a feeling not so easily removed; next, Macy felt and even intimated, that he was the lawful commander of his own schooner, in cases in which Daggett was disabled, and that the latter had no power to transfer him and his people to the authority of any other individual. All these points were discussed that day, with some freedom, particularly among the Vineyardmen, and especially the last.

Wisely has it been said that "the king's

name is a tower of strength." They who have the law on their side carry with them a weight of authority that it is not easy to shake by means of pure reasoning on right or wrong. Men are much inclined te defer to those who are thus armed, legal control being ordinarily quite as effective in achieving a victory as having one's "quarrel just." In a certain sense, authority indeed becomes justice, and we look to its proper exercise as one of the surest means of asserting what "is right between man and man."

"The *commodore* says that the critturs are to be treated delicately," said Macy, laughing, as he lanced his first seal that morning, a young one of the fur species; "so take up the pet, lads, and lay it in its cradle, while I go to look for its mamma."

A shout of merriment succeeded this sally, and the men were only so much the more disposed to be rebellious and turbulent, in consequence of hearing so much freedom of remark in their officer.

"The child's in its cradle, Mr. Macy," returned Jenkins, who was a wag as well as the mate. "In my judgment, the best mode of rocking it to sleep will be by knocking over all these grim chaps that are so plenty in our neighborhood."

"Let 'em have it!" cried Macy, making an onset on an elephant, as he issued the order. In an instant the rocks at that point of the island were a scene of excitement and confusion. Hazard, who was near at hand, succeeded in restraining his own people, but it really seemed as if the Vineyard-men were mad. A great many seals were killed, it is true; but twenty were frightened to take refuge in the ocean where one was slain. All animals have their alarm cries, or, if not absolutely cries, signals that are understood by themselves. Occcasionally, one sees a herd, or a flock, take to its heels, or to its wings, without any apparent cause, but in obedience to some warning that is familiar to their instincts. Thus must it have been with the seals; for the rock was soon deserted, even at a distance of a league from the scene of slaughter, leaving Hazard and his gang literally with nothing to do, unless, indeed, they returned to complete some stowage that remained to be done on board their own craft.

"I suppose you know, Mr. Macy, all this is contrary to orders," said Hazard, as he was leading his own gang back toward the cove. "You see I am obliged to go in and report."

"Report and welcome," was the answer. "I have no commander but Captain Daggett;—and, by the way, if you see him, Hazard, just tell him we have made a glorious morning's work of it."

"Ay, ay; you will have your hands full enough to-day, Macy; but how will it be to-morrow?"

"Why, just as it has been to-day. The devils must come up to blow, and we're sartin of 'em, somewhere along the shore. This day's work is worth any two that I've seen since I came upon the island."

"Very true; but what will to-morrow's work be worth? I will tell Captain Daggett what you wish me to say, however, and we will hear his opinion on the subject. In my judgment, he means to command his craft till she gets back to the hole, legs or no legs."

Hazard went his way, shaking his head ominously as he proceeded. Nor was he much mistaken in what he expected from Daggett's anger. That experienced sealer sent for his mate, and soon gave him to understand that he was yet his commander. Loose and neighborly as is usually the discipline of one of these partnership vessels, there is commonly a man on board who is every way competent to assert the authority given him by the laws, as well as by his contract. Macy was sent for, rebuked, and menaced with degradation from his station, should he again presume to violate his orders. As commonly happens in cases of this nature, regrets were expressed by the offender, and future obedience promised.

But the mischief was done. Sealing was no longer the regular, systematic pursuit it had been on that island, but had become precarious and changeful. At times the men met with good success; then days would occur in which not a single creature of any of the different species

would be taken. The Vineyard schooner was not more than half full, and the season was fast drawing to a close. Roswell was quite ready to sail, and he began to chafe a little under the extra hazards that were thus imposed on himself and his people.

In the meantime, or fully three weeks after the occurrence of the accident to Daggett, the injuries received by the wounded man were fast healing. The bones had knit, and the leg promised in another month to become tolerably sound, if not as strong as it had been before the hurt. All the bruises were well, and the captain of the Vineyard craft was just beginning to move about a little on crutches; a prodigious relief to one of his habits, after the confinement to the house. By dint of great care he could work his way down on the shelf that stretched like a terrace, for two hundred yards beneath the dwelling. Here he met Roswell, on the morning of the Sabbath, just three weeks after their unfortunate visit to the mountain. Each took his seat on a low point of rock, and they began to converse on their respective prospects, and on the condition of their vessels and crews. Stephen was near his officer, as usual.

"I believe Stimson was right in urging me to give the men their Sabbaths," observed Gardiner, glancing round at the different groups, in which men were washing, shaving, and otherwise getting rid of the impurities created by another week of toil. "They begin anew, after a little rest, with a better will and steadier hands."

"Yes, the Sabbath *is* a great privilege, especially to such as are on shore," returned Daggett. "At sea I make no great account of it; a craft must jog along, high days or holidays."

"Depend on it, the same account is kept of the day, Captain Daggett, in the great log-book above, whether a man is on or off soundings," put in Stephen, who was privileged ever to deliver his sentiments on such subjects. "The Lord is God on the sea as on the land."

There was a pause; for the solemn manner and undoubted sincerity of the speaker produced an impression on his companions, little given as they were to thinking deeply on things of that nature. Then Roswell renewed the discourse, turning it on a matter that had been seriously uppermost in his mind for several days.

"I wish to converse with you, Captain Daggett, about our prospects and chances," he said. "My schooner is full, as you know. We could do no more, if we stayed here another season. You are about half full, with a greatly diminished chance of filling up this summer. Mr. Macy's attack on the seals has put you back a month, at least, and every day we shall find the animals less easy to take. The equinox is not very far off, and then, you know, we shall get less and less sun—so little as to be of no great use to us. We want daylight to get through the ice, and we shall have a long hundred leagues of it between us and clear water, even were we to get under way to-morrow. Remember what a serious thing it would be to get caught up here, in so high a latitude, after the sun has left us!"

"I understand you, Gar'ner," answered the other quietly, though his manner denoted a sort of compelled resignation, rather than any cordial acquiescence in that which he believed his brother master intended to propose. "You're master of your own vessel; and I dare say Deacon Pratt would be much rejoiced to see you coming in between Shelter Island and Oyster Pond. I'm but a cripple, or I think the Vineyard craft wouldn't be many days' run astarn!"

Roswell was provoked; but his pride was touched also. Biting his lip, he was silent for a moment, when he spoke very much to the point, but generously, and like a man.

"I'll tell you what it is, Daggett," said our hero, "good-fellowship is good-fellowship, and the flag is the flag. It is the duty of all us Yankee seamen to stand by the stripes; and I hope I'm as ready as another to do what I ought to do in such a matter; but my owner is a close calculator, and I am much inclined to think that he will care less for this sort of feel-

ing than you and I. The deacon was never in blue water."

"So I suppose. He has a charming daughter, I believe, Gar'ner?"

"You mean his niece, I suppose," answered Roswell, coloring. "The deacon never had any child himself, I believe—at least he has none living. Mary Pratt is his niece."

"It's all the same—niece or daughter, she's comely, and will be rich, I hear. *Well*, I am *poor*, and what is more, a *cripple!*"

Roswell could have knocked his companion down, for he perfectly understood the character of the allusion; but he had sufficient self-command to forbear saying anything that might betray how much he felt.

It is always easier to work upon the sensitiveness of a spirited and generous-minded man than to influence him by force or apprehensions. Roswell had never liked the idea of leaving Daggett behind him, at that season, and in that latitude; and he relished it still less, now that he saw a false reason might be attributed to his conduct.

"You certainly do not dream of wintering here, Captain Daggett?" he said, after a pause.

"Not if I can help it. But the schooner can never go back to the Vineyard without a full hold. The very women would make the island too hot for us in such a case. Do your duty by Deacon Pratt, Gar'ner, and leave me here to get along as well as I can. I shall be able to walk a little in a fortnight; and in a month I hope to be well enough to get out among the people, and regulate their sealing a little myself. Mr. Macy will be more moderate with my eye on him."

"A month! He who stays here another month may almost make up his mind to stay eight more of them; if, indeed, he ever get away from the group at all!"

"A late start is better than a half-empty vessel. When you get in to Oyster Pond, Gar'ner, I hope you will send a line across to the Vineyard, and tell 'em all about us."

Another long and brooding pause succeeded, during which Roswell's mind was made up.

"I will do this with you, Daggett," he said, speaking like one who had fully decided on his course. "Twenty days longer will I remain here, and help to make out your cargo; after which I sail, whether you get another skin or a thousand. This will be remaining as long as any prudent man ought to stay in so high a latitude."

"Give me your hand, Gar'ner. I knew you had the clear stuff in you, and that it would make itself seen at the proper moment. I trust that Providence will favor us—it's really a pity to lose as fine a day as this; especially as the critturs are coming up on the rocks to bask something like old times."

"You'll gain no great help from that Providence you just spoke of, Captain Daggett, by forgetting to keep 'holy the Sabbath,'" said Stimson, earnestly. "Try forbearance a little, and find the good that will come of it."

"He is right," said Roswell, "as I know from having done as he advises. Well, our bargain is made. For twenty days longer I stay here, helping you to fill up. That will bring us close upon the equinox, when I shall get to the northward as fast as I can. In that time, too, I think you will be able to return to duty."

This, then, was the settled arrangement. Roswell felt that he conceded more than he ought to do; but the feeling of good-fellowship was active within him, and he was strongly adverse to doing anything that might wear the appearance of abandoning a companion in his difficulties. All this time our hero was fully aware that he was becoming a competitor; and he was not without his suspicions that Daggett wished to keep him within his view until the visit had been paid to the key. Nevertheless, Roswell's mind was made up. He would remain the twenty days, and do all he could in that time to help along the voyage of the Vineyarders.

The sealing was now continued with more order and method than had been observed under Macy's control. The old caution was respected, and the work pros-

pered in proportion. Each night, on his return to the house, Gardiner had a good report to make; and that peculiar snapping of the eye, that denoted Daggett's interest in his calling, was to be again traced in the expression of the Vineyarder's features; a certain proof that he was fast falling into his old train of thought and feeling. Daggett was never happier than when listening to some account of the manner in which an old elephant or lion had been taken, or a number of fur-seals had been made to pay their tribute to the enterprise and address of his people.

As for Roswell, though he complied with his promise, and carried on the duty with industry and success, his eye was constantly turned on those signs that denote the advance of the seasons. Now he scanned the ocean to the northward, and noted the diminished number as well as lessened size of the floating bergs; proofs that the summer and the waves had been at work on their sides. Next, his look was on the sun, which was making his daily course lower and lower each time that he appeared, settling rapidly away toward the north, as if in haste to quit a hemisphere that was so little congenial to his character. The nights, always cool in that region, began to menace frost; and the signs of the decline of the year that come so much later in more temperate climates began to make themselves apparent here. It is true, that of vegetation there was so little, and that little so meager and of so hardy a nature, that in this respect the progress of the seasons was not to be particularly noted; but in all others Roswell saw with growing uneasiness that the latest hour of his departure was fast drawing near.

The sealing went on the while, and with reasonable returns, though the golden days of the business had been seriously interrupted by Macy's indiscretion and disobedience. The men worked hard, for they too foresaw the approach of the long night of the antarctic circle, and all the risk of remaining too long. As we have had frequent occasion to use the term "antarctic," it may be well here to say a few words in explanation. It is not our wish to be understood that these sealers had penetrated literally within that belt of eternal snows and ice, but approximatively. Few navigators, so far as our knowledge extends, have absolutely gone so far south as this. Wilkes did it, it is true; and others among the late explorers have been equally enterprising and successful. The group visited by Gardiner on this occasion was quite near to this imaginary line; but we do not feel at liberty precisely to give its latitude and longitude. To this hour it remains a species of private property; and in this age of anti-rentism and other audacious innovations on long-received and venerable rules of conduct, we do not choose to be parties to any inroads on the rights of individuals when invaded by the cupidity and ruthless power of numbers. Those who wish to imitate Roswell must find the islands by bold adventure, as he reached them; for we are tongue-tied on the subject. It is enough, therefore, that we say the group is *near* the antarctic circle; whether a little north or a little south of it is a matter of no moment. As those seas have a general character, we shall continue to call them the antarctic seas; with the understanding that, included in the term, are the nearest waters without as well as within the circle.

Glad enough was Roswell Gardiner when his twenty days were up. March was now far advanced, and the approach of the long nights was near. The Vineyard craft was not full, nor was Daggett yet able to walk without a crutch; but orders were issued by Gardiner, on the evening of the last day, for his own crew to "knock off sealing," and to prepare to get under way for home.

"Your mind is made up, Gar'ner," said Daggett, in a deprecating sort of way, as if he still had latent hopes of persuading his brother-master to remain a little longer. "Another week would almost fill us up."

"Not another day," was the answer. "I have stayed too long already, and shall be off in the morning. If you will take my advice, Captain Daggett, you will do the same thing. Winter comes i-

this latitude very much as spring appears in our own; or, with a hop, skip, and a jump. I have no fancy to be groping about among the ice after the nights get to be longer than the days!"

"All true enough, Gar'ner; all quite true—but it has such a look to take a craft home, and she not full!"

"You have a great abundance of provisions; stop and whale awhile on the False Banks, as you go north. I would much rather stick by you there a whole month than remain here another day."

"You make me narvous talking of the group in this way! I'm sartain that this bay must remain clear of ice several weeks longer."

"Perhaps it may; it is more likely to be so than to freeze up. But this will not lengthen the days and carry us safe through the fields and bergs that we know are drifting about out here to the northward. There's a hundred leagues of ocean thereaway, Daggett, that I care for more just now than for all the seal that are left on these islands. But, talking is useless; I go to-morrow; if you are wise, you will sail in company."

This settled the matter. Daggett well knew it would be useless to remain without the aid of Roswell's counsel, and that of his crew's hands; for Macy was not to be trusted any more as the leader of a gang of sealers. The man had got to be provoked and reckless, and had called down upon himself latterly more than one rebuke. It was necessary, therefore, that one of the *Sea Lions* should accompany the other. The necessary orders were issued accordingly, and "hey for home!" were the words that now cheerfully passed from mouth to mouth. That pleasant idea of "home," in which is concentrated all that is blessed in this life, the pale of the Christian duties and charities excepted, brings to each mind its particular forms of happiness and good. The weather-beaten seaman, the foot-worn soldier, the weary traveler, the adventurer in whatever lands interest or pleasure may lead, equally feels a throb in his heart as he hears the welcome sounds of "hey for home." Never were craft prepared for sea with greater rapidity than was the case now with our two *Sea Lions*. It is true that the Oyster Ponders were nearly ready, and had been so for a fortnight; but a good deal remained to be done among the Vineyarders. The last set themselves to their task with a hearty good-will, however, and with corresponding results.

"We will leave the house standing for them that come after us," said Roswell, when the last article belonging to his schooner was taken out of it. "The deacon has crammed us so full of wood that I shall be tempted to throw half of it overboard, now we have so much cargo. Let all stand, Hazard, bunks, planks, and all; for really we have no room for the materials. Even this wood," pointing to a pile of several cords that had been landed already to make room for skins and casks that had been brought out in shocks, "must go to the next comer. Perhaps it may be to ourselves; for we sailors never know what port will next fetch us up."

"I hope it will be old Sag, sir," answered Hazard, cheerfully; "for, though no great matter of a seaport, it is near every man's home, and may be called a sort of doorway to go in and out of the country through."

"A side-door, at the best," answered Roswell. "With you, I trust it will be the next haven that we enter; though I shall take the schooner at once in behind Shelter Island, and tie her up to the deacon's wharf."

What images of the past and future did these few jocular words awaken in the mind of our young sealer! He fancied that he saw Mary standing in the porch of her uncle's habitation, a witness of the approach of the schooner, looking wistfully at the still indistinct images of those who were to be seen on her decks. Mary had often done this in her dreams; again and again had she beheld the white sails of the *Sea Lion* driving across Gardiner's Bay, and entering Peconic; and often had she thus gazed in the weather-worn countenance of him who occupied so much of her

thoughts—so many of her prayers—picturing through the mysterious images of sleep the object she so well loved when waking.

And where was Mary Pratt at that day and hour when Roswell was thus issuing his last orders at Sealer's Land; and what was her occupation, and what her thoughts? The difference in longitude between the group and Montauk was so trifling that the hour might be almost called identical. Literally so, it was not; but mainly so, it was. There were not the five degrees in difference that make the twenty minutes in time. More than this we are not permitted to say on this subject; and this is quite enough to give the navigator a pretty near notion of the position of the group. As a degree of longitude measures less than twenty-eight statute miles at the polar circles, this is coming within a day's run of the spot, so far as longitude is concerned; and nearer than that we do not intend to carry the overanxious reader, let his curiosity be as lively as it may.

And where, then, was Mary Pratt? Safe, well, and reasonably happy, in the house of her uncle, where she had passed most of her time since infancy. The female friends of mariners have always fruitful sources of uneasiness in the pursuit itself; but Mary had no other cause for concern of this nature than what was inseparable from so long a voyage, and the sea into which Roswell had gone. She well knew that the time was arrived when he was expected to be on his way home; and as hope is an active and beguiling feeling, she already fancied him to be much advanced on his return. But a dialogue which took place that very day—nay, that very hour—between her and the deacon will best explain her views and opinions, and expectations.

"It's very extr'or'nary, Mary," commenced the uncle, "that Gar'ner doesn't write! If he only know'd how a man feels when his property is ten thousand miles off, I'm sartain he would write, and not leave me with so many misgivings in the matter."

"By whom is he to write, uncle?" answered the more considerate and reasonable niece. "There are no post-offices in the antarctic seas, nor any travelers to bring letters by private hands."

"But he *did* write once; and plaguy good news was it that he sent us in that letter!"

"He did write from Rio, for there he had the means. By my calculations, Roswell has left his sealing-ground some three or four weeks, and must now be as many thousand miles on his way home."

"D'ye think so, gal—d'ye think so?" exclaimed the deacon, his eyes fairly twinkling with pleasure. "That would be good news; and if he doesn't stop too long by the way, we might look for him home in less than ninety days from this moment!"

Mary smiled pensively, and a richer color stole into her cheeks slowly, but distinctly.

"I do not think, uncle, that Roswell Gardiner will be very likely to stop on his way to us here, on Oyster Pond," was the answer she made.

"I should be sorry to think that. The best part of his v'y'ge may be made in the West Ingees, and I hope he is not a man to overlook his instructions."

"Will Roswell be obliged to stop in the West Indies, uncle!"

"Sartain—if he obeys his orders; and I think the young man will do *that*. But the business there will not detain him long"—Mary's countenance brightened again at this remark—"and, should you be right, we may still look for him in the next ninety days."

Mary remained silent for a short time, but her charming face was illuminated by an expression of heartfelt happiness, which, however, the next remark of her uncle's had an obvious tendency to disturb.

"Should Gar'ner come home successful, Mary," inquired the deacon; "successful in all things—successful in sealing, and successful in that other matter—the West Ingee business, I mean—but successful in all, as I daily pray he may be—I want to know if you would then have him; always supposing that he got back himself unchanged?"

"Unchanged, I shall never be his wife," answered Mary tremulously, but firmly.

The deacon looked at her in surprise; for he had never comprehended but one reason why the orphan and penniless Mary should refuse so pertinaciously to become the wife of Roswell Gardiner; and that was his own want of means. Now the deacon loved Mary more than he was aware of himself, but he had never actually made up his mind to leave her the heiress of his estate. The idea of parting with property at all was too painful for him to think of making a will; and without such an instrument there were others who would have come in for a part of the assets, "share and share alike," as the legal men express it. Of all this was the deacon fully aware, and it occasionally troubled him; more of late than formerly, since he felt in his system the unerring signs of decay. Once had he got so far as to write on a page of foolscap, "In the name of God, Amen;" but the effort proved too great for him, and he abandoned the undertaking. Still Deacon Pratt loved his niece, and was well inclined to see her become the wife of "young Gar'ner," more especially should the last return successful.

"Unchanged!" repeated the uncle, slowly; "you sartainly would not wish to marry him, Mary, if he was *changed!*"

"I do not mean changed in the sense you are thinking of, uncle. But we will not talk of this now. Why should Roswell stop in the West Indies at all? It is not usual for our vessels to stop there."

"No, it is not. If Gar'ner stop at all it will be on a very *unusual* business, and one that may make all our fortunes—your'n, as well as his'n and mine, Mary."

"I hope that sealers never meddle with the transportation of slaves, uncle!" the girl exclaimed, with a face filled with apprehension. "I would rather live and die poor than have anything to do with them!"

"I see no such great harm in the trade, gal; but such is not Roswell's ar'nd in the West Ingees. It's a great secret, the reason of his call there; and I will venture to foretell that, should he make it, and should it turn out successful, you will marry him, gal."

Mary made no reply. Well was she assured that Roswell had an advocate in her own heart that was pleading for him, night and day; but firm was her determination not to unite herself with one, however dear to her, who set up his own feeble understanding of the nature of the mediation between God and man in opposition to the plainest language of revelation, as well as to the prevalent belief of the church since the ages that immediately succeeded the Christian era.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Poor child of danger, nursling of the storm,
Sad are the woes that wreck thy manly form!
Rocks, waves, and winds the shatter'd bark delay;
Thy heart is sad, thy home is far away."

—CAMPBELL.

It was about midday when the two *Sea Lions* opened their canvas, at the same moment, and prepared to quit Sealer's Land. All hands were on board, every article was shipped for which there was room, and nothing remained that denoted the former presence of man on that dreary island but the deserted house and three or four piles of cord-wood, that had grown on Shelter Island and Martha's Vineyard, and which was now abandoned on the rocks of the antarctic circle. As the topsails were sheeted home, and the heavy fore-and-aft mainsails were hoisted, the songs of the men sounded cheerful and animating. "Home" was in every tone, each movement, all the orders. Daggett was on deck, in full command, though still careful of his limb, while Roswell appeared to be everywhere. Mary Pratt was before his mind's eye all that morning; nor did he even once think how pleasant it would be to meet her uncle, with a "There, deacon, is your schooner, with a good cargo of elephant oil, well chucked off with fur-seal skins."

The Oyster Pond craft was the first clear of the ground. The breeze was little felt in that cove, where usually it did

not seem to blow at all, but there was wind enough to serve to cast the schooner, and she went slowly out of the rocky basin under her mainsail, foretopsail, and jib. The wind was at southwest—the norwester of that hemisphere—and it was fresh and howling enough on the other side of the island. After Roswell had made a stretch out into the bay of about a mile, he laid his foretopsail flat aback, hauled over his jib-sheet, and put his helm hard down, in waiting for the other schooner to come out and join him. In a quarter of an hour Daggett got within hail.

"Well," called out the last, "you see I was right, Gar'ner; wind enough out here, and more, still further from the land. We have only to push in among them bergs while it is light, pick out a clear spot, and heave-to during the night. It will hardly do for us to travel among so much ice in the dark."

"I wish we had got out earlier, that we might have made a run of it by daylight," answered Roswell. "Ten hours of such a wind, in my judgment, would carry us well toward clear water."

"The delay could not be helped. I had so many traps ashore, it took time to gather them together. Come, fill away, and let us be moving. Now we are under way, I'm in as great haste as you are yourself."

Roswell complied, and away the two schooners went, keeping quite near to each other, having smooth water, and still something of a moderated gale, in consequence of the proximity and weatherly position of the island. The course was toward a spot to leeward, where the largest opening appeared in the ice, and where it was hoped a passage to the northward would be found. The further the two vessels got from the land, the more they felt the power of the wind, and the greater was their rate of running. Daggett soon found that he could spare his consort a good deal of canvas, a consequence of his not being full, and he took in his topsail; though, running nearly before the wind, his spar would have stood even a more severe strain.

As the oldest mariner, it had been agreed between the two masters that Daggett should lead the way. This he did for an hour, when both vessels were fairly out of the great bay, clear of the group altogether, and running off northeasterly, at a rate of nearly ten knots in the hour. The sea got up as they receded from the land, and everything indicated a gale, though one of no great violence. Night was approaching, and an Alpine-like range of icebergs was glowing, to the northward, under the oblique rays of the setting sun. For a considerable space around the vessels, the water was clear, not even a cake of any sort being to be seen; and the question arose in Daggett's mind, whether he ought to stand on, or to heave-to and pass the night well to windward of the bergs.

Time was precious, the wind was fair, the heavens clear, and the moon would make its appearance about nine, and might be expected to remain above the horizon until the return of day. This was one side of the picture. The other presented less agreeable points. The climate was so fickle that the clearness of the skies was not to be depended on, especially with a strong southwest wind—a little gale, in fact; and a change in this particular might be produced at any moment. Then it was certain that floes, and fragments of bergs, would be found near, if not absolutely among the sublime mountain-like piles that were floating about, in a species of grand-fleet, some twenty miles to leeward. Both of our masters, indeed all on board of each schooner, very well understood that the magnificent array of icy islands which lay before them was owing to the currents, for which it is not always easy to account. The clear space was to be attributed to the same cause, though there was little doubt that the wind, which had now been to the southward fully eight-and-forty hours, had contributed to drive the icy fleet to the northward. As a consequence of these facts, the field-ice must be in the vicinity of the bergs, and the embarrassment from that source was known always to be very great.

It required a good deal of nerve for a mariner to run in among dangers of the character just described, as the sun was setting. Nevertheless, Daggett did it; and Roswell Gardiner followed the movement, at the distance of about a cable's length. To prevent separation, each schooner showed a light at the lower yardarm, just as the day was giving out its last glimmerings. As yet, however, no difficulty was encountered; the Alpine-looking range being yet quite two hours' run still to leeward. Those two hours must be passed in darkness; and Daggett shortened sail in order not to reach the ice before the moon rose. He had endeavored to profit by the light so long as it remained, to find a place at which he might venture to enter among the bergs, but he had met with no great success. The opening first seen now appeared to be closed, either by means of the drift or by means of the change in the position of the vessels; and he no longer thought of *that*. Fortune must be trusted to, in some measure; and on he went, Roswell always closely following.

The early hours of that eventful night were intensely dark. Nevertheless, Daggett stood down toward the icy range, using no other precautions than shortening sail and keeping a sharp lookout. Every five minutes the call from the quarter-deck of each schooner to "keep a bright lookout" was heard, unless, indeed, Daggett or Roswell was on his own own forecastle, thus occupied in person. No one on board either vessel thought of sleep. The watch had been called, as is usual at sea, and one-half of the crew was at liberty to go below and turn in. What was more, those small fore-and-aft rigged craft were readily enough handled by a single watch; and this so much the more easily, now that their topsails were in. Still, not a man left the deck. Anxiety was too prevalent for this, the least experienced hand in either crew being well aware that the next four-and-twenty hours would in all human probability be decisive of the fate of the voyage.

Both Daggett and Gardiner grew more and more uneasy as the time for the moon to rise drew near without the orb of night making its appearance. A few clouds were driving athwart the heavens, though the stars twinkled as usual, in their diminutive but sublime splendor. It was not so dark that objects could not be seen at a considerable distance; and the people of the schooners had no difficulty in very distinctly tracing, and that not very far ahead, the broken outlines of the chain of floating mountains. No Alpine pile, in very fact, could present a more regular or better defined range, and in some respects more fantastic outlines. When the bergs first break away from their native moorings, their forms are ordinarily somewhat regular; the summits commonly resembling tableland. This regularity of shape, however, is soon lost under the rays of the summer sun, the wash of the ocean, and most of all by the wear of the torrents that gush out of their own frozen bosoms. A distinguished navigator of our own time has compared the appearance of these bergs, after their regularity of shape is lost, and they begin to assume the fantastic outlines that uniformly succeed, to that of a deserted town, built of the purest alabaster, with its edifices crumbling under the seasons, and its countless unpeopled streets, avenues, and alleys. All who have seen the sight unite in describing it as one of the most remarkable that comes from the lavish hand of Nature.

About nine o'clock on the memorable night in question there was a good deal of fog driving over the ocean to increase the obscurity. This rendered Daggett doubly cautious, and he actually hauled up close to the wind, heading off well to the westward, in order to avoid running in among the bergs in greater uncertainty than the circumstances would seem to require. Of course Roswell followed the movement; and, when the moon first diffused its mild rays on the extraordinary scene, the two schooners were pitching into a heavy sea, within less than a mile of the weather-line of the range of bergs. It was soon apparent that floes or field-ice accompanied the floating mountains, and extended so far to the southward of them as to be already within an incon-

venient, if not hazardous, proximity to the two vessels. These floes, however, unlike those previously encountered, were much broken by the undulations of the waves, and seldom exceeded a quarter of a mile in diameter; while thousands of them were no larger than the ordinary drift ice of our own principal rivers in the time of a freshet. Their vicinity to the track of the schooners, indeed, was first ascertained by the noise they produced in grinding against each other, which soon made itself audible even among the roaring of the gale.

Both of our masters now began to be exceedingly uncomfortable. It was soon quite apparent that Daggett had been too bold, and had led down toward the ice without sufficient caution and foresight. As the moon rose higher and higher the difficulties and dangers to leeward became at each minute more and more apparent. Nothing could have been more magnificent than the scene which lay before the eyes of the mariners, or would have produced a deeper feeling of delight, had it not been for the lively consciousness of the risk the two schooners and all who were in them unavoidably ran by being so near and to windward of such an ice coast, if one may use the expression as relates to floating bodies. By that light it was very easy to imagine Wilkes' picture of a ruined town of alabaster. There were arches of all sizes and orders; pinnacles without number; towers, and even statues and columns. To these were to be added long lines of perpendicular walls, that it was easy enough to liken to fortresses, dungeons, and temples. In a word, even the Alps, with all their peculiar grandeur, and certainly on a scale so vastly more enlarged, possess no one aspect that is so remarkable for its resemblance to the labors of man, composed of a material of the most beautiful transparency, and, considered as the results of human ingenuity, on a scale so gigantic. The glaciers have often been likened, and not unjustly, to a frozen sea; but here were congealed mountains seemingly hewed into all the forms of art, not by the chisel it is true, but by the action of the unerring laws which produced them.

Perhaps Roswell Gardiner was the only individual in those two vessels that night who was fully alive to all the extraordinary magnificence of its unusual pictures. Stephen may, in some degree, have been an exception to the rule; though he saw the hand of God in nearly all things. "It's wonderful to look at, Captain Gar'ner, isn't it?" said this worthy seaman, about the time the light of the moon began to tell on the view; "wonderful, truly, did we not know who made it all!" These few and simple words had a cheering influence on Roswell, and served to increase his confidence in eventual success. God did produce all things, either directly or indirectly; this even his sceptical notions could allow; and that which came from divine wisdom must be intended for good. He would take courage, and for once in his life trust to Providence. The most resolute man by nature feels his courage augmented by such a resolution.

The gales of the antarctic sea are said to be short, though violent. They seldom last six-and-thirty hours, and for about a third of that time they blow with their greatest violence. As a matter of course, the danger amid the ice is much increased by a tempest; though a good working breeze, or small gale of wind, perhaps, adds to a vessel's security, by rendering it easier to handle her, and to avoid floes and bergs. If the ice is sufficient to make a lee, smooth water is sometimes a consequence; though it oftener happens that the turbulence produced in clear water is partially communicated over a vast surface, causing the fields and mountains to grind against each other under the resistless power of the waves. On the present occasion, however, the schooners were still in open water, where the wind had a long and unobstructed rake, and a sea had got up that caused both of the little craft to bury nearly to their gunwales. What rendered their situation still more unpleasant was the fact that all the water which came aboard of them now soon froze. To this, however, the men were

accustomed, it frequently happening that the moisture deposited on the rigging and spars by the fogs froze during the nights of the autumn. Indeed, it has been thought by some speculators on the subject, that the bergs themselves are formed in part by a similar process, though snows undoubtedly are the principal element in their composition. This it is which gives the berg its stratified appearance, no geological formation being more apparent or regular in this particular than most of those floating mountains.

About ten, the moon was well above the horizon; the fog had been precipitated in dew upon the ice, where it congealed, and helped to arrest the progress of dissolution; while the ocean became luminous for the hour, and objects comparatively distinct. Then it was that the seamen first got a clear insight into the awkwardness of their situation. The bold are apt to be reckless in the dark; but when danger is visible, their movements become more wary and better calculated than those of the timid. When Daggett got this first good look at the enormous masses of the field-ice, that, stirred by the unquiet ocean, were grinding each other, and raising an unceasing, rushing sound, like that the surf produces on a beach, though far louder, and with a hardness in it that denoted the collision of substances harder than water, he almost instinctively ordered every sheet to be flattened down, and the schooner's head brought as near the wind as her construction permitted. Roswell observed the change in his consort's line of sailing, slight as it was, and imitated the maneuver. The sea was too heavy to dream of tacking, and there was not room to wear. So close, indeed, were some of the cakes, those that might be called the stragglers of the grand array, that repeatedly each vessel brushed along so near them as actually to receive slight shocks from collisions with projecting portions. It was obvious that the vessels were setting down upon the ice, and that Daggett did not haul his wind a moment too soon.

The half hour that succeeded was one of engrossing interest. It settled the point whether the schooners could or could not eat their way into the wind sufficiently to weather the danger. Fragment after fragment was passed; blow after blow was received; until suddenly the field-ice appeared directly in front. It was in vast quantities, extending to the southward as far as the eye could reach. There remained no alternative but to attempt to wear. Without waiting longer than to assure himself of the facts, Daggett ordered his helm put up and the main gaff lowered. At that moment both the schooners were under their jibs and foresails, each without its bonnet, and double-reefed mainsails. This was not canvas very favorable for wearing, there being too much after-sail; but the sheets were attended to, and both vessels were soon driving dead to leeward, amid the foam of a large wave; the next instant ice was heard grinding along their sides.

It was not possible to haul up on the other tack ere the schooners would be surrounded by the floes; and seeing a comparatively open passage a short distance ahead, Daggett stood in boldly, followed closely by Roswell. In ten minutes they were fully a mile within the field, rendering all attempts to get out of it to windward so hopeless as to be almost desperate. The maneuver of Daggett was begun under circumstances that scarcely admitted of any alternative, though it might be questioned if it were not the best expedient that offered. Now that the schooners were so far within the field-ice the water was much less broken, though the undulations of the restless ocean were still considerable, and the grinding of ice occassioned by them was really terrific. So loud was the noise produced by these constant and violent collisions, indeed, that the roaring of the wind was barely audible, and that only at intervals. The sound was rushing, like that of an incessant avalanche, attended by cracking noises that resembled the rending of a glacier.

The schooners now took in their foresails, for the double purpose of diminishing their velocity and of being in a better condition to change their course, in order

to avoid dangers ahead. These changes of course were necessarily frequent; but, by dint of boldness, perseverance, and skill, Daggett worked his way into the comparatively open passage already mentioned. It was a sort of river amid the floes, caused doubtless by some of the inexplicable currents, and was fully a quarter of a mile in width, straight as an air-line, and of considerable length; though how long could not be seen by moonlight. It led, moreover, directly down toward the bergs, then distant less than a mile. Without stopping to ascertain more, Daggett stood on, Roswell keeping close on his quarter. In ten minutes they drew quite near to that wild and magnificent ruined city of alabaster that was floating about in the antarctic sea!

Notwithstanding the imminent peril that now most seriously menaced the two schooners, it was not possible to approach that scene of natural grandeur without feelings of awe that were allied quite as much to admiration as to dread. Apprehensions certainly weighed on every heart; but curiosity, wonder, even delight, were all mingled in the breasts of the crews. As the vessels came driving down into the midst of the bergs, everything contributed to render the movements imposing in all senses, appalling in one. There lay the vast maze of floating mountains, generally of a spectral white at that hour, though many of the masses emitted hues more pleasing, while some were black as night. The passages between the bergs, or, what might be termed the streets and lanes of this mysterious-looking, fantastical, yet sublime city of the ocean, were numerous, and of every variety. Some were broad, straight avenues, a league in length; others winding and narrow; while a good many were little more than fissures, that might be fancied lanes.

The schooners had not run a league within the bergs before they felt much less of the power of the gale; and the heaving and setting of the seas were sensibly diminished. What was, perhaps, not to be expected, the field-ice had disappeared entirely within the passages of the bergs, and the only difficulty in navigating was to keep in such channels as had outlets, and which did not appear to be closing. The rate of sailing of the two schooners was now greatly lessened, the mountains usually intercepting the wind, though it was occasionally heard howling and scuffling in the ravines, as if in a hurry to escape and pass on to the more open seas. The grinding of the ice, too, came down in the currents of air, furnishing fearful evidence of dangers that were not yet distant. As the water was now sufficiently smooth, and the wind, except at the mouths of particular ravines, was light, there was nothing to prevent the schooners from approaching each other. This was done, and the two masters held a discourse together on the subject of their present situation.

"You're a bold fellow, Daggett, and one I should not like to follow in a voyage round the world," commenced Roswell. "Here we are, in the midst of some hundreds of icebergs; a glorious sight to behold, I must confess—but are we ever to get out again?"

"It is much better to be here, Gar'ner," returned the other, "than to be among the floes. I'm always afraid of my starn and my rudder when among the field-ice; whereas there is no danger hereabouts that cannot be seen before a vessel is on it. Give me my eyes, and I feel that I have a chance."

"There is some truth in that; but I wish these channels were a good deal wider than they are. A man may *feel* a berg as well as see it. Were two of these fellows to take it into their heads to close upon us, our little craft would be crushed like nuts in the crackers!"

"We must keep a good lookout for that. Here seems to be a long bit of open passage ahead of us, and it leads as near north as we can wish to run. If we can only get to the end of it, I shall feel as if half our passage back to Ameriky was made."

The citizen of the United States calls his country "America," *par excellence*, never using the addition of "North," as

is practiced by most European people. Daggett meant "home," therefore, by his "Ameriky," in which he saw no other than the east end of Long Island, Gardider's Island, and Martha's Vineyard. Roswell understood him, of course; so no breath was lost.

"In my judgment," returned Gardiner, "we shall not get clear of this ice for a thousand miles. Not that I expect to be in a wilderness of it, as we are to-night; but, after such a summer, you may rely on it, Daggett, that the ice will get as far north as 45°, if not a few degrees further."

"It is possible; I have seen it in 42° myself; and in 40° to the nor'ard of the equator. If it gets as far as 50°, however, in this part of the world, it will do pretty well. That will be play to what we have just here——In the name of Divine Providence, what is that, Gar'ner?"

Not a voice was heard in either vessel; scarcely a breath was drawn. A heavy groaning sound had been instantly succeeded by such a plunge into the water as might be imagined to succeed the fall of a fragment from another planet. Then all the bergs near by began to rock as if agitated by an earthquake. This part of the picture was both grand and frightful. Many of those masses rose above the sea more than two hundred feet perpendicularly and showed wall-like surfaces of half a league in length. At the point where the schooners happened to be just at that moment, the ice-islands were not so large, but quite as high, and consequently were more easily agitated. While the whole panorama was bowing and rocking, pinnacles, arches, walls, and all seeming about to totter from their bases, there came a wave sweeping down the passage that lifted them high in the air, some fifty feet at least, and bore them along like pieces of cork fully a hundred yards. Other waves succeeded, though of less height and force; when gradually the water regained its former and more natural movement, and subsided.

"This has been an earthquake!" exclaimed Daggett. "That volcano has been pent up, and the gas is stirring up the rocks beneath the sea."

"No, sir," answered Stimson, from the forecastle of his own schooner, "it's not that, Captain Daggett. One of them bergs has turned over, like a whale wallowing, and it has set all the others a-rocking."

This was the true explanation; one that did not occur to the less experienced sealers. It is a danger, however, of no rare occurrence in the ice, and one that ever needs to be looked to. The bergs, when they first break loose from their native moorings, which is done by the agency of frosts, as well as by the action of the seasons in the warm months, are usually tabular, and of regular outlines; but this shape is soon lost by the action of the waves on ice of very different degrees of consistency; some being composed of frozen snow, some of the moisture precipitated from the atmosphere in the shape of fogs, and some of pure frozen water. The first melts soonest; and a berg that drifts for any length of time with one particular face exposed to the sun's rays, soon loses its equilibrium, and is canted with an inclination to the horizon. Finally the center of gravity gets outside of the base, when the still monstrous mass rolls over in the ocean, coming literally bottom upward.

There are all degrees and varieties of these ice-slips, if one may so term them, and they bring in their train the many different commotions that such accidents would naturally produce. That which had just alarmed and astonished our navigators was of the following character. A mass of ice that was about a quarter of a mile in length, and of fully half that breadth, which floated quite two hundred feet above the surface of the water, and twice that thickness beneath it, was the cause of the disturbance. It had preserved its outlines unusually well, and stood upright to the last moment; though, owing to numerous strata of snow-ice, its base had melted much more on one of its sides than on the other. When the precise moment arrived that would have carried a perpendicular line from the center of gravity without this base, the monster turned leisurely in its lair, producing some such effect as would have been wrought

by the falling of a portion of a Swiss mountain into a lake; a sort of accident of which there have been many and remarkable instances.

Stimson's explanation, while it raised the curtain from all that was mysterious, did not serve very much to quiet apprehensions. If one berg had performed such an evolution, it was reasonable to suppose that others might do the same thing; and the commotion made by this, which was at a distance, gave some insight into what might be expected from a similar change in another nearer by. Both Daggett and Gardiner were of opinion that the fall of a berg of equal size within a cable's length of the schooners might seriously endanger the vessels by dashing them against some wall of ice, if in no other manner. It was too late, however, to retreat, and the vessels stood on gallantly.

The passage between the bergs now became quite straight, reasonably broad, and was so situated as regarded the gale as to receive a full current of its force. It was computed that the schooners ran quite three marine leagues in the hour that succeeded the overturning of the berg. There were moments when the wind blew furiously; and, taking all the accessories of that remarkable view into the account, the scene resembled one that the imagination might present to the mind in its highest flights, but which few could ever hope to see with their proper eyes. The moonlight, the crowd of icebergs of all shapes and dimensions, seeming to flit past by the rapid movements of the vessels; the variety of hues, from spectral white to tints of orange and emerald, pale at that hour, yet distinct; streets and lanes that were scarce opened ere they were passed; together with all the fantastic images that such objects conjured to the thoughts, contributed to make that hour much the most wonderful that Roswell Gardiner had ever passed. To add to the excitement, a couple of whales came blowing up the passage, coming within a hundred yards of the schooners. They were fin-backs, which are rarely if ever taken, and were suffered to pass unharmed. To capture a whale, however, amid so many bergs, would be next to impossible, unless the animal were killed by the blow of the harpoon, without requiring the keener thrust of the lance.

At the end of the hour mentioned, the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard rapidly changed her course, hauling up by a sudden movement to the westward. The passage before her was closed, and there remained but one visible outlet, toward which the schooner slowly made her way, having got rather too much to leeward of it, in consequence of not earlier seeing the necessity for the change of course in that dim and deceptive light. Roswell, being to windward, had less difficulty, but, notwithstanding, he kept his station on his consort's quarter, declining to lead. The passage into which Daggett barely succeeded in carrying his schooner was fearfully narrow, and appeared to be fast closing; though it was much wider further ahead, could the schooners but get through the first dangerous strait. Roswell remonstrated ere the leading vessel entered, and pointed out to Daggett the fact that the bergs were evidently closing, each instant increasing their movement, most probably through the force of attraction. It is known that ships are thus brought in contact in calms, and it is thought a similar influence is exercised on the icebergs. At all events, the wind, the current, or attraction, was fast closing the passage through which the schooners had now to go.

Scarcely was Daggett within the channel, when an enormous mass fell from the summit of one of the bergs, literally closing the passage in his wake, while it compelled Gardiner to put his helm down, and to tack ship, standing off from the tottering berg. The scene that followed was frightful! The cries on board the leading craft denoted her peril, but it was not possible for Roswell to penetrate to her with his vessel. All he could do was to heave-to his own schooner, lower a boat, and pull back toward the point of danger. This he did at once, manfully, but with an anxious mind and throbbing heart. He actually urged his boat into the chasm

beneath an arch in the fallen fragment, and made his way to the very side of Daggett's vessel. The last was nipped again, and that badly, but was not absolutely lost. The falling fragment from the berg alone prevented her, and all in her, from being ground into powder. This block, of enormous size, kept the two bergs asunder; and now that they could not absolutely come together, they began slowly to turn in the current, gradually opening and separating, at the very point where they had so lately seemed attracted to a closer union. In an hour the way was clear, and the boats towed the schooner stern foremost into the broader passage.

CHAPTER XX.

"A voice upon the prairies,
A cry of woman's woe,
That mingleth with the autumn blast
All fitfully and low."
—MRS. SIGOURNEY.

THE accident to the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard occurred very near the close of the month of March, which, in the southern hemisphere, corresponds to our month of September. This was somewhat late for a vessel to remain in so high a latitude, though it was not absolutely dangerous to be found there several weeks longer. We have given a glance at Mary Pratt and her uncle about this time; but it has now become expedient to carry the reader forward for a considerable period, and take another look at our heroine and her miserly uncle some seven months later. In that interval a great change had come over the deacon and his niece, and hope had nearly deserted all those who had friends on board the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, as the following explanation will show was reasonable and to be expected.

When Captain Gardiner sailed it was understood that his absence would not extend beyond a single season. All who had friends and connections on board his schooner had been assured of this, and great was the anxiety, and deep the disappointment, when the first of our own summer months failed to bring back the adventurers. As week succeeded week and the vessel did not return, the concern increased, until hope began to be lost in apprehension. Deacon Pratt groaned in spirit over his loss, finding little consolation in the gains secured by means of the oil sent home, as is apt to be the case with the avaricious when their hearts are once set on gain. As for Mary, the load on *her* heart increased in weight, as it might be, day by day, until those smiles, which had caused her sweet countenance to be radiant with innocent joy, entirely disappeared, and she was seen to smile no more. Still complaints never passed her lips. She prayed much, and found all her relief in such pursuits as comported with her feelings, but she seldom spoke of her grief; never, except at weak moments, when her querulous kinsman introduced the subject in his frequent lamentations over his losses.

The month of November is apt to be stormy on the Atlantic coasts of the republic. It is true that the heaviest gales do not then occur, but the weather is generally stern and wintry, and the winds are apt to be high and boisterous. At a place like Oyster Pond the gales from the ocean are felt with almost as much power as on board a vessel at sea; and Mary became keenly sensible of the change from the bland breezes of summer to the sterner blasts of autumn. As for the deacon, his health was actually giving way before anxiety, until the result was getting to be a matter of doubt. Premature old age appeared to have settled on him, and his niece had privately consulted Dr. Sage on his case. The excellent girl was grieved to find that the mind of her uncle grew more worldly, his desires for wealth more grasping, as he was losing his hold on life, and was approaching nearer to that hour when time is succeeded by eternity. All this while, however, Deacon Pratt "kept about," as he expressed it himself, and struggled to look after his interests, as had been his practice through life. He collected his debts, foreclosed his mortgages when necessary, drove tight bargains for his wood and other salable articles, and neglected nothing that he thought would

tend to increase his gains. Still his heart was with his schooner, for he had expected much from that adventure, and the disappointment was in proportion to the former hopes.

One day near the close of November the deacon and his niece were alone together in the "keeping-room"—as it was, if it be not still, the custom among persons of New England origin to call the ordinary sitting apartment—he bolstered up in an easy chair, on account of increasing infirmities, and she plying the needle in her customary way. The chairs of both were so placed that it was easy for either to look out upon that bay, now of a wintry aspect, where Roswell had last anchored previously to sailing.

"What a pleasant sight it would be, uncle," Mary, almost unconsciously to herself, remarked, as, with tearful eyes, she sat gazing intently on the water, "could we only awake and find the *Sea Lion* at anchor under the point of Gardiner's Island? I often fancy that such *may* be—nay, *must* be the case yet; but it never comes to pass! I would not tell you yesterday, for you did not seem to be as well as common, but I have got an answer, by Baiting Joe, to my letter sent across to the Vineyard."

The deacon started and half turned his body toward his niece, on whose face his own sunken eyes were now fastened with almost ferocious interest. It was the love of Mammon stirring within him the lingering remains of covetousness. He thought of his property, while Mary thought of those whose lives had been endangered if not lost, by the unhappy adventure. The latter understood the look, however, so far as to answer its inquiry in her usual gentle, feminine voice.

"I am sorry to say, sir, that no news has been heard from Captain Daggett or any of his people," was the sad reply to this silent interrogatory. "No one on the island has heard a word from the Vineyard vessel since the day before she sailed from Rio. There is the same uneasiness felt among Captain Daggett's friends, as we feel for poor Roswell. They think, however, that the two vessels have kept together, and believe that the same fate has befallen both."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed the deacon as sharply as wasting lungs would allow; "Heaven forbid! If Gar'ner has let that Daggett keep in his company an hour longer than was necessary, he has deserved to meet with shipwreck, though the loss always falls heaviest on the owners."

"Surely, uncle, it is more cheering to think that the two schooners are together in those dangerous seas, than to imagine one, alone, left to meet the risks, without a companion!"

"You talk idly, gal—as women always talk. If you know'd all, you wouldn't think of such a thing."

"So you have said often, uncle, and I fear there is some mystery preying all this time on your spirits. Why not relieve your mind, by telling your troubles to me? I am your child in affection, if not by birth."

"You're a good gal, Mary," answered the deacon, a good deal softened by the plaintive tones of one of the gentlest voices that ever fell on human ear; "an excellent creatur' at the bottom—but of course you know nothing of the sealing business, and next to nothing about taking care of property."

"I hope you do not think me wasteful, sir? That is a character I should not like to possess."

"No, not wasteful; on the contrary, curful (so the deacon pronounced the word) and considerate enough, as to *keeping*, but awfully indifferent as to *getting*. Had I been as indifferent as you are yourself, your futur' days would not be so comfortable and happy as they are now likely to be, a'ter my departure—if depart I *must*."

"My future life happy and comfortable!" *thought* Mary; then she struggled to be satisfied with her lot, and contented with the decrees of Providence. "It is but a few hours that we live in this state of trials, compared to the endless existence that is to succeed it."

"I wish I knew all about this voyage of Roswell's," she added, aloud; for she

was perfectly certain that there was something to be told that, as yet, the deacon had concealed from her. "It might relieve your mind, and lighten your spirits of a burden, to make me a confidant."

The deacon mused in silence for more than five minutes. Seldom had his thoughts gone over so wide a reach of interests and events in so short a space of time; but the conclusion was clear and decided.

"You ought to know all, Mary, and you shall know all," he answered, in the manner of a man who had made up his mind beyond appeal. "Gar'ner has gone a'ter seal to some islands that the Daggett who died here, about a year and a half ago, told me of; islands of which nobody know'd anything, according to his account, but himself. His shipmates, that saw the place when he saw it, were all dead, afore he let me into the secret."

"I have long suspected something of the sort, sir, and have always supposed that the people of Martha's Vineyard had got some news of this place, by the manner in which Captain Daggett has acted."

"Isn't it wonderful, gal? Islands, they tell me, where a schooner can fill up with ile and skins in the shortest season in which the sun ever shone upon an antarctic summer! Wonderful! wonderful!"

"Very extraordinary, perhaps; but we should remember, uncle, at how much risk the young men of the country go on these distant voyages, and how dearly their profits are sometimes bought."

"Bought! If the schooner would only come back, I should think nothing of all that. It's the cost of the vessel and outfit, Mary, that weighs so much on *my* spirits. Well, Gar'ner's first business is with them islands, which are at an awful distance for one to trust his property; but, 'nothing ventured, nothing got,' they say. By my calculations, the schooner has had to go a good five hundred miles among the ice to get to the spot; not such ice as a body falls in with, in going and coming between England and Ameriky, as we read of in the papers, but ice that covers the sea as we sometimes see it piled up in Gar'ner's Bay, only a hundred times higher, and deeper, and broader, and colder! It's desperate *cold* ice, the sealers all tell me, that of the antarctic seas. Some on 'em think it's colder down south than it is the other way, up toward Greenland and Iceland itself. It's extr'or'nary, Mary, that the weather should grow cold as a body journeys south; but so it is, by all accounts. I never could understand it, and it isn't so in Ameriky, I'm sartin. I suppose it must come of their turning the months round, and having their winter in the midst of the dog-days. I never could understand it, though Gar'ner has tried. more than once, to reason me into it. I believe, but I don't understand."

"It is all told in my geography here," answered Mary, mechanically taking down the book, for her thoughts were far away in those icy seas that her uncle had been so graphically describing. "I dare say we can find it all explained in the elementary parts of this book."

"They *do* make their geographies useful, nowadays," said the deacon, with rather more animation than he had shown before that morning. "They've got 'em to be now almost as useful as almanacs. Read what it says about the seasons, child."

"It says, sir, that the changes in the seasons are owing to 'the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit.' I do not exactly understand what that means, uncle."

"No; it's not as clear as it might be. The declination—"

"*In*clination, sir, is what is printed here."

"Ay, inclination. I do not see why any one should have much inclination for winter, but so it must be, I suppose. The 'arth's orbit has an inclination toward changes,' you say."

"The changes in the seasons, sir, are owing to 'the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit.' It does not say that the orbit has an inclination in any particular way."

Thus was it with Mary Pratt, and thus

was it with her uncle, the deacon. One of the plainest problems in natural philosophy was Hebrew to both, simply because the capacity that Providence had so freely bestowed on each had never been turned to the consideration of such useful studies. But, while the mind of Mary Pratt was thus obscured on this simple, and, to such as chose to give it an hour of reflection, perfectly intelligible proposition, it was radiant as the day on another mystery, and one that has confounded thousands of the learned, as well as of the unlearned. To her intellect nothing was clearer, no moral truth more vivid, no physical fact more certain, than the incarnation of the Son of God. She had the "evidence of things not seen," in the fullness of Divine grace; and was profound on this, the greatest concern of human life, while unable even to comprehend how the "inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit" could be the cause of the change of the seasons. And was it thus with her uncle?—he who was a pillar of the "meeting," whose name was often in men's mouths as a "shining light," and who had got to be identified with religion in his own neighborhood to a degree that caused most persons to think of Deacon Pratt when they should be thinking of the Saviour? We are afraid he knew as little of one of these proportions as of the other.

"It's very extr'or'nary," resumed the deacon, after ruminating on the matter for a few moments, "but I suppose it *is* so. Wasn't it for this 'inclination' to cold weather, our vessels might go and seal under as pleasant skies as we have here in June. But, Mary, I suppose that wasn't to be, or it would be."

"There would have been no seals, most likely, uncle, if there was no ice. They tell me that such creatures love the cold, and the ice, and the frozen oceans. Too much warm weather would not suit them."

"But, Mary, it might suit other folks! Gar'ner's whole ar'nd isn't among the ice, or a'ter them seals."

"I do not know that I understand you, sir. Surely Roswell has gone on a sealing voyage."

"Sartain; there's no mistake about *that*. But there may be many stopping-places in so long a road."

"Do you mean, sir, that he is to use any of these stopping-places, as you call them?" asked Mary, eagerly, half-breath less with her anxiety to hear all. "You said something about the West Indies once."

"Harkee, Mary—just look out into the entry and see if the kitchen door is shut. And now come nearer to me, child, so that there may be no need of bawling what I've got to say all over Oyster Pond. There, sit down, my dear, and don't look so eager, as if you wanted to eat me, or my mind may misgive me, and then I couldn't tell you, a'ter all. Perhaps it would be best, if I was to keep my own secret."

"Not if it has anything to do with Roswell, dear uncle; not if it has anything to do with him! You have often advised me to marry him, and I ought to know all about the man you wish me to marry."

"Yes, Gar'ner will make a right good husband for any young woman, and I *do* advise you to have him. You are my brother's da'ghter, Mary, and I give you this advice, which I should give you all the same, had you been my own child, instead of his'n."

"Yes, sir, I know that. But what about Roswell, and his having to stop, on his way home?"

"Why, you must know, Mary, that this v'y'ge came altogether out of that seaman who died among us, last year. I was kind to him, as you may remember, and helped him to many little odd comforts"—odd enough were they, of a verity—"and he was grateful. Of all virtues, give me gratitude, say I! It is the noblest, as it is the most oncommon of all good qualities. How little have I met with in my day! Of all the presents I have made, and gifts bestowed, and good acts done, not one in ten has ever met with any gratitude."

Mary sighed: for well did she know how little he had given, of his abundance, to relieve the wants of his fellow-creatures. She sighed, too, with a sort of mild impa-

tience, that the information she sought with so much eagerness was so long and needlessly delayed. But the deacon had made up his mind to tell her all.

"Yes, Gar'ner has got something to do besides sealing," he resumed of himself, when his regret at the prevalence of ingratitude among men had exhausted itself. "Suthin'"—for this was the way he pronounced that word—"that is of more importance than the schooner's hold full of ile. Ile is ile, I know, child; but gold is gold. What do you think of *that?*"

"Is Roswell, then, to stop at Rio again, in order to sell his oil, and send the receipts home in gold?"

"Better than that—much better than that, if he gets back at all." Mary felt a chill at her heart. "Yes, that is the p'int—if he gets back at all. If Gar'ner ever does come home, child, I shall expect to see him return with a considerable sized keg—almost a barrel, by all accounts—filled with gold!"

The deacon stared about him as he made this announcement, like a man who was afraid that he was telling too much. Nevertheless, it was to his own niece, his brother's daughter, that he had confided thus much of his great secret—and reflection reassured him.

"How is Roswell to get all this gold, uncle, unless he sells his cargo?" Mary asked, with obvious solicitude.

"That's another p'int. I'll tell you all about it, gal, and you'll see the importance of keeping the secret. This Daggett—not the one who is out in another schooner, another *Sea Lion*, as it might be, but his uncle, who died down here at the Widow White's—well, *that* Daggett told more than the latitude and longitude of the sealing islands—he told me of a buried treasure!"

"Buried treasure!—Buried by whom, and consisting of what, uncle?"

"Buried by seamen who make free with the goods of others on the high seas, ag'in the time when they might come back and dig it up, and carry it away to be used. Consisting of what, indeed! Consisting principally, accordin' to Daggett's account, of heavy doubloons; though there was a lot of old English guineas among 'em. Yes, I remember that he spoke of them guineas—three thousand and odd, and nearly as many doubloons!"

"Was Daggett, then, a pirate, sir?—for they who make free with the goods of others on the high seas are neither more nor less than pirates."

"No; not he, himself. He got this secret from one who *was* a pirate, however, and who was a prisoner in a jail where he was himself confined for smuggling. Yes; that man told him all about the buried treasure, in return for some acts of kindness shown him by Daggett. It is well to be kind sometimes, Mary."

"It is well to be kind always, sir; even when it is misunderstood, and the kindness is abused. What was the redemption but kindness and love, and god-like compassion on those who neither understood it nor felt it? But money collected and buried by pirates can never become *yours*, uncle; nor can it ever become the property of Roswell Gardiner."

"Whose is it, then, gal?" demanded the deacon, sharply. "Gar'ner had some such silly notion in his head when I first told him of this treasure; but I soon brought *him* to hear reason."

"I think Roswell must always have seen that a treasure obtained by robbery can never justly belong to any but its rightful owner."

"And who is this rightful owner, pray? or *owners*, I might say; for the gold was picked up, here and there, out of all question, from many hands. Now, supposing Gar'ner gets this treasure, as I still hope he may, though he is an awful time about it—but suppose he gets it, how is he to find the rightful owners? There it is, a bag of doubloons, say—all looking just alike, with the head of a king, a Don Somebody, and the date, and the Latin and Greek—now who can say that 'this is my doubloon; I lost it at such a time—it was taken from me by such a pirate, in such a sea; and I was whipped till I told the thieves where I had hid the gold?' No, no, Mary; depend on't, no action of 'plevy would lie ag'in a single one of all them pieces. They are lost, one and all, to their

former owners, and will belong to the man that succeeds in getting hold of 'em ag'in; who will become a rightful owner in his turn. All property comes from law; and if the law won't 'plevy money got in this way, nobody can maintain a claim to it."

"I should be very, very sorry, my dear uncle, to have Roswell enrich himself in this way."

"You talk like a silly young woman, and one that doesn't know her own rights. We had no hand in robbing the folks of their gold. They lost it years ago, and may be dead—probably are, or they would make some stir about it—or have forgotten it, and couldn't for their lives tell a single one of the coins they once had in their possession; and don't know whether what they lost was thrown into the sea, or buried in the sand on a key. Mary, child, you must never mention anything I tell you on this subject!"

"You need fear nothing, sir, from me. But I do most earnestly hope Roswell will have nothing to do with any such ill-gotten wealth. He is too noble-hearted and generous to get rich in this way."

"Well, well, say no more about it, child; you're romantic and notional. Just pour out my drops; for all this talking makes me breathe thick. I'm not what I was, Mary, and cannot last long; but was it the last breath I drew, I would stand to it, that treasure desarted and found in this way belongs to the last holder. I go by the law, however; let Gar'ner only find it—well, well, I'll say no more about it now; for it distresses you, and that I don't like to see. Go, and hunt up the 'Spectator,' child, and look for the whaling news—perhaps there may be suthin' about the sealers, too."

Mary did not require to be told twice to do as her uncle requested. The paper was soon found, and the column that contained the marine intelligence consulted. The niece read a long account of whalers spoken, with so many hundred or so many thousand barrels of oil on board, but could discover no allusion to any sealer. At length she turned her eyes into the body of the journal, which being semi-weekly, or tri-weekly, was crowded with matter, and started at seeing a paragraph to the following effect:

"By the arrival of the *Twin Sisters* at Stonington, we learn that the ice has been found farther north in the southern hemisphere this season than it has been known to be for many years. The sealers have had a great deal of difficulty in making their way through it; and even vessels bound round the Cape of Good Hope have been much embarrassed by its presence."

"That's it!—Yes, Mary, that's just it!" exclaimed the deacon. "It's that awful ice. If 'twasn't for the ice, sealin' would be as pleasant a calling as preachin' the gospel! It is possible that this ice has turned Gar'ner back, when he has been on his way home, and that he has been waiting for a better time to come north. There's one good p'int in this news—they tell me that when the ice is seen drifting about in low latitudes, it's a sign there's less of it in the higher."

"The Cape of Good Hope is certainly, in one sense, in a low latitude, uncle; if I remember right, it is not as far south as we are north; and, as you say, it *is* a good sign if the ice has come anywhere near it."

"I don't say it has, child; I don't say it has. But it may have come to the northward of Cape Horn, and that will be a great matter; for all the ice that is drifting about there comes from the polar seas, and is so much taken out of Gar'ner's track."

"Still he must come *through* it to get home," returned Mary, in her sweet, melancholy tones. "Ah! why cannot men be content with the blessings that Providence places within our immediate reach, that they must make distant voyages to accumulate others!"

"You like your tea, I fancy, Mary Pratt—and the sugar in it, and your silks and your ribbons that I've seen you wear; how are you to get such matters if there's to be no going on v'y'ges? Tea and sugar, and silks and satins don't grow along with the clams on ''Yster Pond'"—for so the deacon uniformly pronounced the word "oyster."

Mary acknowledged the truth of what was said, but changed the subject. The journal contained no more that related to sealing or sealers, and it was soon laid aside.

"It may be that Gar'ner is digging for the buried treasure all this time," the deacon at length resumed. "That may be the reason he is so late. If so, he has nothing to dread from ice."

"I understand you, sir, that this money is supposed to be buried on a key—in the West Indies, of course."

"Don't speak so loud, Mary—there's no need of letting all 'Yster Pond know where the treasure is. It may be in the West Ingees, or it may not; there's keys all over the 'arth, I take it."

"Do you not think, uncle, that Roswell would write, if detained long among those keys?"

"You wouldn't hear to post-offices in the antarctic ocean, and now you want to put them on the sand-keys of the West Ingees! Woman's always a sailin' ag'in wind and tide."

"I do not think so, sir, in this case, at least. There must be many vessels passing among the keys of the West Indies, and nothing seems to me to be easier than to send letters by them. I am quite sure Roswell would write, if in a part of the world where he thought what he wrote would reach us."

"Not he—not he—Gar'ner's not the man I take him for, if he let any one know what he is about in them keys, until he had done up all his business there. No, no, Mary. We shall never hear from him in that quarter of the world. It may be that Gar'ner is a-digging about, and has difficulty in finding the place; for Dagget's account had some weak spots in it."

Mary made no reply, though she thought it very little likely that Roswell would pass months in the West Indies employed in such a pursuit, without finding the means of letting her know where he was, and what he was about. The intercourse between these young people was somewhat peculiar, and ever had been. In listening to the suit of Roswell, Mary had yielded to her heart; in hesitating about accepting him, she deferred to her principle. Usually, a mother—not a managing, match-making, interested parent, but a prudent, feminine, well-principled mother—is of the last importance to the character and well-being of a young woman. It sometimes happens, however, that a female who has no parent of her own sex, and who is early made to be dependent on herself, if the bias of her mind is good, becomes as careful and prudent of herself and her conduct, as the advice and solicitude of the most tender mother could make her. Such had been the case with Mary Pratt. Perfectly conscious of her own deserted situation, high principled, and early awake to the defects in her uncle's character, she had laid down severe rules for the government of her own conduct; and from these rules she never departed. Thus it was that she permitted Roswell to write, though she never answered his letters. She permitted him to write, because she had promised not to shut her ears to his suit, so long as he practiced toward her his native and manly candor; concealing none of his opinions, and confessing his deficiency on the one great point that formed the only obstacle to their union.

A young woman who has no mother, if she escapes the ills attendant on the privation while her character is forming, is very apt to acquire qualities that are of great use in her future life. She learns to rely on herself, gets accustomed to think and act like an accountable being, and is far more likely to become a reasoning and useful head of a family, than if brought up in dependence, and under the control of even the best maternal government. In a word, the bias of the mind is sooner obtained in such circumstances than when others do so much of the thinking; whether that bias be in a right or a wrong direction. But Mary Pratt had early taken the true direction in all that relates to opinion and character, and had never been wanting to herself in any of the distinctive and discreet deportment of her sex.

Our heroine hardly knew whether or not to seek for consolation in her uncle's

suggestion of Roswell being detained among the keys, in order to look for the hidden treasure. The more she reflected on this subject, the more did it embarrass her. Few persons who knew of the existence of such a deposit would hesitate about taking possession of it, and, once reclaimed, in what way were the best intentions to be satisfied with the disposition of the gold? To find the owners would probably be impossible; and a question in casuistry remained. Mary pondered much on this subject, and came to the conclusion that, were she the person to whom such a treasure were committed, she would set aside a certain period for advertising; and failing to discover those who had the best claim to the money, that she would appropriate every dollar to a charity.

Alas! Little did Mary understand the world. The fact that money was thus advertised would probably have brought forward a multitude of dishonest pretenders to having been robbed by pirates; and scarce a doubloon would have found its way into the pocket of its rightful owner, even had she yielded all to the statements of such claimants.

All this, however, did not bring back the missing Roswell. Another winter was fast approaching, with its chilling storms and gales, to awaken apprehensions by keeping the turbulence of the ocean, as it might be, constantly before the senses. Not a week now passed that the deacon did not get a letter from some wife, or parent, or sister, or perhaps from one who hesitated to avow her relations to the absent mariner; all inquiring after the fate of those who had sailed in the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond, under the orders of Captain Roswell Gardiner.

Even those of the Vineyard sent across questions, and betrayed anxiety and dread, in the very manner of putting their interrogatories. Each day did the deacon's apprehensions increase, until it was obvious to all around him that this cause, united to others that were more purely physical, perhaps, was seriously undermining his health, and menacing his existence. It is a sad commentary on the greediness for gain manifested by this person, that ere the adventure he had undertaken on the strength of Daggett's reluctant communications was brought to any apparent result, he himself was nearly in the condition of that diseased seaman, with as little prospect of being benefited by his secrets as was the man himself who first communicated their existence. Mary saw all this clearly, and mourned almost as much over the blindness and worldliness of her uncle as she did over the now nearly assured fate of him whom she had so profoundly loved in her heart's core.

Day by day did time roll on, without bringing any tidings of either of the *Sea Lions*. The deacon grew weak fast, until he seldom left his room, and still more rarely the house. It was now that he was induced to make his will, and this by an agency so singular as to deserve being mentioned. The Rev. Mr. Whittle broached the subject one day, not with any interested motive of course, but simply because the "meeting-house" wanted some material repairs, and there was a debt on the congregation that it might be a pleasure to one who had long stood in the relation to it that Deacon Pratt filled, to pay off, when he no longer had any occasion for the money for himself. It is probable the deacon at length felt the justice of this remark; for he sent to Riverhead for a lawyer, and made a will that would have stood even the petulant and envious justice of the present day; a justice that inclines to divide a man's estate infinitesimally, lest some heir become a little richer than his neighbors. After all, no small portion of that which struts about under the aspects of right, and liberty, and benevolence, is in truth derived from some of the most sneaking propensities of human nature!

CHAPTER XXI.

"I, too, have seen thee on thy surging path,
When the night-tempest met thee; thou didst dash
Thy white arms high in heaven, as if in wrath,
Threatening the angry sky; thy waves did lash
The laboring vessel, and with deadening crash
Rush madly forth to scourge its groaning sides;
Onward thy billows came, to meet and clash
In a wild warfare, till the lifted tides
Mingled their yesty tops, where the dark storm-cloud rides."—PERCIVAL.

THE first movement of the mariner, when his vessel has been brought in collision with any hard substance, is to sound the pumps. This very necessary duty was in the act of performance by Daggett, in person, even while the boats of Roswell Gardiner were towing his strained and roughly-treated craft into the open water. The result of this examination was waited for by all on board, including Roswell, with the deepest anxiety. The last held the lantern by which the height of the water in the well was to be ascertained; the light of the moon scarce sufficing for such a purpose. Daggett stood on the top of the pump himself, while Gardiner and Macy were at its side. At length the sounding-rod came up, and its lower end was held out, in order to ascertain how high up it was wet.

"Well, what do you make of it, Gar'ner?" Daggett demanded, a little impatiently. "Water there must be; for no craft that floats could have stood such a squeeze, and not have her sides open."

"There must be near three feet of water in your hold," answered Roswell, shaking his head. "If this goes on, Captain Daggett, it will be hard work to keep your schooner afloat!"

"Afloat she shall be, while a pump-break can work. Here, rig this larboard pump at once, and get it in motion."

"It is possible that your seams opened under the nip, and have closed again, as soon as the schooner got free. In such a case, ten minutes at the pump will let us know it."

Although there is no duty to which seamen are so averse as pumping—none, perhaps, that is actually so exhausting and laborious—it often happens that they have recourse to it with eagerness, as the only available means of saving their lives. Such was now the case, the harsh but familiar strokes of the pump-break being audible amid the more solemn and grand sounds of the grating of icebergs, the rushing of floes, and the occasional scuffling and howling of the winds. The last appeared to have changed in their direction, however; a circumstance that was soon noted, there being much less of biting cold in the blasts than had been felt in the earlier hours of the night.

"I do believe that the wind has got round here to the northeast," said Roswell, as he paced the quarter-deck with Daggett, still holding in his hand the well wiped and dried sounding-rod, in readiness for another trial. "That last puff was right in our teeth!"

"Not in our teeth, Gar'ner; no, not in *my* teeth," answered Daggett, "whatever it may be in *your'n*. I shall try to get back to the island, where I shall endeavor to beach the schooner, and get a look at her leaks. This is the *most* I can hope for. It would never do to think of carrying a craft, after such a nip, as far as Rio, pumping every foot of the way!"

"That will cause a great delay, Captain Daggett," said Roswell, doubtingly. "We are now well in among the first great body of the ice; it may be as easy to work our way to the northward of it, as to get back into clear water to the southward."

"I dare say it would; but back I go. I do not ask you to accompany us, Gar'ner: by no means. A'ter the handsome manner in which you've waited for us so long, I couldn't think of such a thing! If the wind has r'ally got round to northeast, and I begin to think it has, I shall get the schooner into the cove in four-and-twenty hours; and there's as pretty a spot to beach her, just under the shelf where we kept our spare casks, as a body can wish. In a fortnight we'll have her leaks all stopped, and be jogging along in your wake. You'll tell the folks on Oyster Pond that we're a-coming, and they'll be sure to send the news across to the Vineyard."

This was touching Roswell on a point of honor, and Daggett knew it very well. Generous and determined, the young man was much more easily influenced by a silent and indirect appeal to his liberal qualities than he could possibly have been by any other consideration. The idea of deserting a companion in distress, in a sea like that in which he was, caused him to shrink from what, under other circumstances, he would regard as an imperative duty. The deacon, and still more, Mary, called him north; but the necessities of the Vineyarders would seem to chain him to their fate.

"Let us see what the pump tells us now," cried Roswell, impatiently. "Perhaps the report may make matters better than we have dared to hope for. If the pump gains on the leak, all may yet be well."

"It's encouraging and hearty to hear you say this; but no one who was *in* that nip, as a body might say, can ever expect the schooner to make a run of two thousand miles without repairs. To my eye, Gar'ner, these bergs are separating, leaving us a clearer passage back to the open water."

"I do believe you are right; but it seems a sad loss of time, and a great risk, to go through these mountains again," returned Roswell. "The wind has shifted; and the nearest bergs, from some cause or other, are slowly opening; but recollect what a mass of floe-ice there is outside. Let us sound again."

The process was renewed this time much easier than before, the boxes being already removed. The result was soon known.

"Well, what news, Gar'ner?" demanded Daggett, leaning down, in a vain endeavor to perceive the almost imperceptible marks that distinguished the wet part of the rod from that which was dry. "Do we gain on the leak, or does the leak gain on us? God send it may be the first!"

"God has so sent it, sir," answered Stimson, reverently; for he was holding the lantern, having remained on board the damaged vessel by the order of his officer. "It is He alone, Captain Daggett, who could do this much to seamen in distress."

"Then to God be thanks, as is due! If we can but keep the leak under, the schooner may yet be saved."

"I think it may be done, Daggett," added Roswell. "That one pump has brought the water down more than two inches; and, in my judgment, the two together would clear her entirely."

"We'll pump her till she sucks!" cried Daggett. "Rig the other pump, men, and go to the work heartily."

This was done, though not until Roswell ordered fully half of his own crew to come to the assistance of his consort. By this time the two vessels had filled away, made more sail, and were running off before the new wind, retracing their steps, so far as one might judge of the position of the great passage. Daggett's vessel led, and Hazard followed; Roswell still remaining on board the injured craft. Thus passed the next few hours. The pumps soon sucked, and it was satisfactorily ascertained that the schooner could be freed from the water by working at them about one-fourth of the time. This was a bad leak, and one that would have caused any crew to become exhausted in the course of a few days. As Roswell ascertained the facts more clearly, he became better satisfied with a decision that, in a degree, had been forced on him. He was passively content to return with Daggett, convinced that taking the injured vessel to Rio was out of the question, until some attention had been paid to her damages.

Fortune—or as Stimson would say, Providence—favored our mariners greatly in the remainder of their run among the bergs. There were several avalanches of snow quite near to them, and one more berg performed a revolution at no great distance; but no injury was sustained by either vessel. As the schooners got once more near to the field-ice, Roswell went on board his own craft; and all the boats, which had been towing in the open passage, were run up and secured. Gardiner now led, leaving

his consort to follow as closely in his wake as she could keep.

Much greater difficulty, and dangers indeed, were encountered among the broken and grating floes, than had been expected, or previously met with. Notwithstanding fenders were got out on all sides, many a rude shock was sustained, and the copper suffered in several places. Once or twice Roswell apprehended that the schooners would be crushed by the pressure on their sides. The hazards were in some measure increased by the bold manner in which our navigators felt themselves called on to push ahead; for time was very precious in every sense, not only on account of the waning season, but actually on account of the fatigue undergone by men who were compelled to toil at the pumps one minute in every four.

At the return of day, now getting to be later than it had been during the early months of their visit to these seas, our adventurers found themselves in the center of vast fields of floating ice, driving away from the bergs, which, influenced by undercurrents, were still floating north, while the floes drove to the southward. It was very desirable to get clear of all this cake-ice, though the grinding among it was by no means so formidable as when the seas were running high and the whole of the frozen expanse was in violent commotion. Motion, however, soon became nearly impossible, except as the schooners drifted in the midst of the mass, which was floating south at the rate of about two knots.

Thus passed an entire day and night. So compact was the ice around them that the mariners passed from one vessel to the other on it, with the utmost confidence. No apprehension was felt so long as the wind stood in its present quarter, the fleet of bergs actually forming as good a lee as if they had been so much land. On the morning of the second day, all this suddenly changed. The ice began to open; why, was matter of conjecture, though it was attributed to a variance between the wind and the currents. This, in some measure, liberated the schooners, and they began to move independently of the floes. About noon, the smoke of the volcano became once more visible; and before the sun went down the cap of the highest elevation in the group was seen, amid the flurries of snow.

Every one was glad to see these familiar landmarks, dreary and remote from the haunts of men as they were known to be; for there was a promise in them of a temporary termination of their labors. Incessant pumping—one minute in four being thus employed on board the Vineyard craft—was producing its customary effect; and the men looked jaded and exhausted. No one who has not stood at a pump-break on board a vessel can form any notion of the nature of the toil, or of the extreme dislike with which seamen regard it. The tread-mill, as we conceive—for our experience extends to the first, though not to the last of these occupations—is the nearest approach to the pain of such toil, though the convict does not work for his life.

On the morning of the fourth day our mariners found themselves in the great bay, in clear water, about a league from the cove, and nearly dead to windward of their port. The helms were put up, and the schooners were soon within the well-known shelter. As they ran in, Roswell gazed around him, in regret, awe, and admiration. He could not but regret being compelled to lose so much precious time, at that particular season. Short as had been his absence from the group, sensible changes in the aspect of things had already occurred. Every sign of summer—and they had ever been few and meager—was now lost; a chill and dreary autumn having succeeded. As a matter of course, nothing was altered about the dwelling; the piles of wood and other objects placed there by the hands of man, remaining just as they had been left; but even these looked less cheering, more unavailable, than when last seen. To the surprise of all, not a seal was visible. From some cause unknown to the men, all of these animals had disappeared, thereby defeating one of Daggett's secret calculations; this provident master having determined, in his own mind, to profit by his accident and seize the occasion to

fill up. Some said that the creatures had gone north to winter; others asserted that they had been alarmed and had taken refuge on one of the other islands; but all agreed in saying that they were gone.

It is known that a seal will occasionally wander a great distance from what may be considered his native waters; but we are not at all aware that they are to be considered as migratory animals. The larger species usually take a wide range of climate to dwell in, and even the little fur-seal sometimes gets astray, and is found on coasts that do not usually come within his haunts. As respects the animals that so lately abounded on Sealer's Land, we shall hazard no theory, our business being principally with facts; but a conversation that took place between the two chief mates on this occasion may possibly assist some inquiring mind in its speculations.

"Well, Macy," said Hazard, pointing along the deserted rocks, "what do you think of *that?* Not an animal to be seen, where there were lately thousands!"

"What do I think of it? Why, I think they are off, and I've know'd such things to happen afore."—The sealers of 1819 were not very particular about their English, even among their officers.—"Any man who watches for signs and symptoms may know how to take this."

"I should like to hear it explained; to me it is quite new."

"The seals are off, and that is a sign *we* should be off too. There's my explanation, and you may make what you please of it. Natur' gives sich hints, and no prudent seaman ought to overlook 'em. I say, that when the seal go, the sealers should go likewise."

"And you set this down as a hint from natur', as you call it?"

"I do; and a useful hint it is. If we was in sailing trim, I'd ha'nt the old man, but I'd get him off this blessed night. Now, mark my works, Hazard—no good will come of that nip, and of this return into port ag'in; and of all this veering and hauling upon cargo."

The other mate laughed; but a call from his commanding officer put a stop to the dialogue. Hazard was wanted to help secure the schooner of Daggett in the berth in which she was now placed. The tides do not appear to rise and fall in very high latitudes, by any means, as much as they do in about 50°. In the antarctic sea they are reported to be of medium elevation and force. This fact our navigators had noted; and Daggett had, at once, carried his schooner on the only thing like a beach that was to be found on any part of that wild coast. His craft was snug within the cove and quite handy for discharging and taking in. Beach, in a proper sense, it was not; being, with a very trifling exception, nothing but a shelf of rock that was a little inclined, and which admitted of a vessel's being placed upon it as on the floor of a dock.

Into this berth Daggett took his schooner, while the other vessel anchored. There was nearly a whole day before them, and all the men were at once set to work to discharge the cargo of the injured vessel. To get rid of the pumps, they would cheerfully have worked the twenty-four hours without intermission. As fast as the vessel was lightened she was hove further and further on the rock, until she was got so high as to be perfectly safe from sinking, or from injuring anything on board her; when the pumps were abandoned. Before night came, however, the schooner was so secured by means of shores, and purchases aloft that were carried out to the rocks, as to stand perfectly upright on her keel. She was thus protected when the tide left her. At low water it was found that she wanted eight feet of being high and dry, having already been lightened four feet. A good deal of cargo was still in, on this the first night after her return.

The crew of Daggett's vessel carried their mattresses ashore, took possession of the bunks, lighted a fire in the stove, and made their preparations to get the caboose ashore next day, and do their cooking in the house, as had been practiced previously to quitting the island. Roswell, and all his people, remained on board their own vessel.

The succeeding day the injured schooner was cleared of everything, even to her spars, the lower masts and bowsprit excepted. Two large sealing crews made quick work with so small a craft. Empty casks were got under her, and at the top of the tide she was floated quite up to the small beach that was composed of the *débris* of rock, already mentioned. As the water left her, she fell over a little, of course; and at half-tide her keel lay high and dry.

The prying eyes of all hands were now busy looking out for the leaks. As might have been expected, none were found near the garboard streak, a fact that was clearly enough proved by a quantity of the water remaining in the vessel after she lay, entirely bare, nearly on her bilge.

"Her seams have opened a few streaks below the bends," said Roswell, as he and Daggett went under the vessel's bottom, looking out for injuries; "and you had better set about getting off the copper at once. Has there been an examination made inside?"

None had yet been made, and our two masters clambered up to the main hatch, and got as good a look at the state of things in the hold, as could be thus obtained. So tremendous had been the pressure, that three of the deck beams were broken. They would have been driven quite clear of their fastenings, had not the wall of ice at each end prevented the possibility of such a thing. As it was, the top-timbers had slightly given way, and the seams must have been opened just below the water-line. When the tide came in again, the schooner righted of course; and the opportunity was taken to pump her dry. There was then no leak; another proof that the defective places must be sought above the present water-line.

With the knowledge thus obtained, the copper was removed, and several of the seams examined. The condition of the pitch and oakum pointed out the precise spots that needed attention, and the calking-irons were immediately set at work. In about a week the job was completed, as was fancied, the copper replaced, and the schooner was got afloat again. Great was the anxiety to learn the effect of what had been done, and quite as great the disappointment, when it was found that there was still a serious leak, that admitted too much water to think of going to sea until it was stopped. A little head-work, however, and that on the part of Roswell, speedily gave a direction to the search that was immediately set on foot.

"This leak is not as low down as the vessel's bilge," he said; "for the water did not run out of her, nor into her, until we got her afloat. It is somewhere then between her light-water load-line and her bilge. Now we have had all the copper off, and the seams examined in the wake of this section of the vessel's bottom, from the fore-chains to the main; and, in my judgment, it will be found that something is wrong about her stem, or her stern-post. Perhaps one of her wood ends has started. Such a thing might very well have happened under so close a squeeze."

"In which case we shall have to lay the craft ashore again, and go to work anew," answered Daggett. "I see how it is; you do not like the delay, and are thinking of Deacon Pratt and Oyster Pond. I do not blame you, Gar'ner; and shall never whisper a syllable ag'in you, or your people, if you sail for home this very a'ternoon, leaving me and mine to look out for ourselves. You've stood by us nobly thus far; and I am too thankful for what you have done already, to ask for more."

Was Daggett sincere in these professions? To a certain point he was; while he was only artful on others. He wished to appear just and magnanimous; while, in secret, it was his aim to work on the better feelings, as well as on the pride of Gardiner, and thus secure his services in getting his own schooner ready, as well as keep him in sight until a certain key had been examined, in the proceeds of which he conceived he had a share, as well as in those of Sealer's Land. Strange as it may seem, even in the strait in which he was now placed, with so desperate a prospect of ever getting his vessel home again, this man clung like a leech to the remotest

chance of obtaining property. There is a bull-dog tenacity on this subject among a certain portion of the great American family—the god-like Anglo-Saxon—that certainly leads to great results in one respect; but which it is often painful to regard, and never agreeable to any but themselves, to be subject to. Of this school was Daggett, whom no dangers, no toil, no thoughts of a future, could divert from a purpose that was colored by gold. We do not mean to say that other nations are not just as mercenary; many are more so; those in particular that have long been corrupted by vicious governments. You may buy half a dozen Frenchmen, for instance, more easily than one Yankee; but let the last actually get his teeth into a dollar, and the muzzle of the ox fares worse in the jaws of the bull-dog.

Roswell was deeply reluctant to protract his stay in the group; but professional pride would have prevented him from deserting a consort under such circumstances, had not a better feeling inclined him to remain and assist Daggett. It is true the last had, in a manner, thrust himself on him, and the connection had been strangely continued down to that moment; but this he viewed as a dispensation of Providence, to which he was bound to submit. The result was a declaration of a design to stand by his companion as long as there was any hope of getting the injured craft home.

This decision pointed at once to the delay of another week. No time was lost in vain regrets, however; but all hands went to work to get the schooner into shallow water again, and to look further for the principal leak. Accurate trimming and pumping showed that a good deal of water was already stopped out; but too much still entered to render it prudent to think of sailing until the injury was repaired. This time the schooner was not suffered to lie on her bilge at all. She was taken into water just deep enough to permit her to stand upright, sustained by shores, while the tide left two or three streaks dry forward; it being the intention to wind her, should the examination forward not be successful.

On stripping off the copper it was found that a wood-end had indeed started, the inner edge of the plank having got so far from its bed as where the outer had been orginally placed. This opened a crack through which a small stream of water must constantly pour, each hour rendering the leak more dangerous by loosening the oakum, and raising the plank from its curvature. Once discovered, however, nothing was easier than to repair the damage. It remained merely to butt-bolt anew the wood-end, drive a few spikes, calk, and replace the copper. Roswell, who was getting each moment more and more impatient to sail, was much vexed at a delay that really seemed unavoidable, as it arose from the particular position of the leak. Placed as it was, in a manner, between wind and water, it was not possible to work at it more than an hour each tide; and the staging permitted but two hands to be busy at the same time. As a consequence of these embarrassments, no less than six tides came in and went out before the stem was pronounced tight again. The schooner was then pumped out, and the vessel was once more taken into deep water. This time it was found that the patience and industry of our sealers were rewarded with success; no leak of any account existing.

"She's as tight as a bottle with a sealed cork, Gar'ner," cried Daggett, a few hours after his craft was at her anchor, meeting his brother-master at his own gangway, and shaking hands with him cordially. "I owe much of this to you, as all the Vineyard shall know, if we ever get home ag'in."

"I am rejoiced that it turns out so, Captain Daggett," was Roswell's reply; "for to own the truth to you, the fortnight we have lost, or shall lose, before we get you stowed and ready to sail again, has made a great change in our weather. The days are shortening with frightful rapidity, and the great bay was actually covered with a skim of ice this very morning. The wind has sent in a

sea that has broken it up; but look about you, in the cove here—a boy might walk on that ice near the rocks."

"There'll be none of it left by night, and the two crews will fill me up in twenty-four hours. Keep a good heart, Gar'ner, I'll take you clear of the bergs in the course of a week."

"I have less fear of the bergs now than of the new ice and the floes. The islands must have got pretty well to the northward by this time; but each night gets colder, and the fields seem to be setting back toward the group, instead of away from it."

Daggett cheered his companion by a good deal of confident talk; but Roswell was heartily rejoiced when, at the end of four-and-twenty hours more, the Vineyard craft was pronounced entirely ready. It was near the close of the day, and Gardiner was for sailing, or moving at once; but Daggett offered several very reasonable objections. In the first place, there was no wind; and Roswell's proposition to tow the schooners out into the middle of the bay, was met by the objection that the people had been hard at work for several days, and that they needed some rest. All that could be gained by moving the schooners then, was to get them outside of the skim of ice that now regularly formed every still night near the land, but which was as regularly broken and dispersed by the waves, as soon as the wind returned. Roswell, however, did not like the appearance of things; and he determined to take his own craft outside, let Daggett do as he might. After discussing the matter in vain, therefore, and finding that the people of the other schooner had eaten their suppers and turned in, he called all hands, and made a short address to his own crew, leaving it to their discretion whether to man the boats or not. As Roswell had pointed out the perfect absence of wind, the smoothness of the water, and the appearances of a severe frost, or cold, for frost there was now, almost at mid-day, the men came reluctantly over to his view of the matter, and consented to work instead of sleeping. The toil, however, could be much lessened, by dividing the crew into the customary watches. All that Roswell aimed at was to get his schooner about a league from the cove, which would be taking her without a line drawn from cape to cape, the greatest danger of new ice being within the curvature of the crescent. This he thought might easily be done in the course of a few hours; and should there come any wind, much sooner. On explaining this to the crew, the men were satisfied.

Roswell Gardiner felt as if a load were taken off his spirts, when his schooner was clear of the ground, and his mainsail was hoisted. A boat was got ahead, and the craft was slowly towed out of the cove, the canvas doing neither good nor harm. As the vessel passed that of Daggett, the last was on deck, the only person visible in the Vineyard craft. He wished his brother-master a good-night, promising to be out as soon as there was any light next morning.

It would not be easy to imagine a more dreary scene than that in which Deacon Pratt's schooner moved out into the waters that separated the different islands of this remote and sterile group. Roswell could just discern the frowning mass of rocks that crowned the center of Sealer's Land; and that was soon lost in the increasing obscurity. The cold was getting to be severe, and the men soon complained that ice was forming on the blades of their oars. Then it was that a thought occurred to our young mariner which had hitherto escaped him. Of what use would it be for his vessel to be beyond the ice, if that of Daggett should be shut in the succeeding day? So sensible did he become to the importance of this idea, that he called in his boat, and pulled back into the cove, in order to make one more effort to persuade Daggett to follow him out.

Gardiner found all the Vineyarders turned in, even to their officers. The fatigue they had lately undergone, united to the cold, rendered the berths very agreeable; and even Daggett begged his visitor would excuse him for not rising to receive his guest. Argument with a man thus circumstanced, and so disposed, was

absolutely useless. After remaining a short time with Daggett, Roswell returned to his own schooner. As he pulled back he ascertained that ice was fast making; and the boat actually cut its way through a thin skim, ere it reached the vessel.

Our hero was now greatly concerned lest he should be frozen in himself, ere he could get into the more open water of the bay. Fortunately a light air sprung up from the northward, and trimming his sails, Gardiner succeeded in carrying his craft to a point where the undulations of the ground-swell gave the assurance of her being outside the segment of the crescent. Then he brailed his foresail, hauled the jib-sheet over, lowered his gaff, and put his helm hard down. After this, all the men were permitted to seek their berths; the officers looking out for the craft in turns.

It wanted but an hour of day, when the second mate gave Roswell a call, according to orders. The young master found no wind, but an intensely cold morning, on going on deck. Ice had formed on every part of the rigging and sides of the schooner where water had touched them; though the stillness of the night, by preventing the spray from flying, was much in favor of the navigators in this respect. On thrusting a boat-hook down, Roswell ascertained that the bay around him had a skim of ice nearly an inch in thickness. This caused him great uneasiness; and he waited with the greatest anxiety for the return of light, in order to observe the condition of Daggett.

Sure enough, when the day came out distinctly, it was seen that ice of sufficient thickness to bear men on it, covered the entire surface within the crescent. Daggett and his people were already at work on it, using the saw. They must have taken the alarm before the return of day; for the schooner was not only free from the ground, but had been brought fully a cable's length without the cove. Gardiner watched the movements of Daggett and his crew with a glass for a short time, when he ordered all hands called. The cook was already in the galley, and a warm breakfast was soon prepared. After eating this, the two whale-boats were lowered, and Roswell and Hazard both rowed as far as the ice would permit them, when they walked the rest of the way to the imprisoned craft, taking with them most of their hands, together with the saw.

It was perhaps fortunate for Daggett that it soon began to blow fresh from the northward, sending into the bay a considerable sea, which soon broke up the ice, and enabled the Vineyard craft to force her way through the fragments, and join her consort about noon.

Glad enough was Roswell to regain his own vessel; and he made sail on a wind, determined to beat out of the narrow waters at every hazard, the experience of that night having told him that they had remained in the cove too long. Daggett followed willingly, but not like a man who had escaped by the skin of his teeth, from wintering near the antarctic circle.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Beside the Moldau's rushing stream,
With the wan moon overhead,
There stood, as in an awful dream,
The army of the dead."—LONGFELLOW.

MOST of our readers will understand what was meant by Mary Pratt's "inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of its orbit;" but as there may be a few who do not, and as the consequences of this great physical fact are materially connected with the succeeding events of the narrative, we propose to give such a homely explanation of the phenomenon as we humbly trust will render it clear to the most clouded mind. The orbit of the earth is the path which it follows in space in its annual revolution around the sun. To a planet there is no up or down, except as ascent and descent are estimated from and toward itself. In all other respects it floats in vacuum, or what is so nearly so as to be thus termed. Now let the uninstructed reader imagine a large circular table, with a light on its surface, and near to its center. The light shall represent the sun, the outer edge of the circle of the

table the earth's orbit, and its surface the plane of that orbit. In nature there is no such thing as a plane at all, the space within the orbit being vacant; but the surface of the table gives a distinct notion of the general position of the earth as it travels around the sun. It is scarcely necessary to say that the axis of the earth is an imaginary line drawn through the planet, from one pole to the other; the name being derived from the supposition that our daily revolution is made on this axis.

Now the first thing that the student is to fix in his mind, in order to comprehend the phenomenon of the seasons, is the leading fact that the earth does not change its attitude in space, if we may so express it, when it changes its position. If the axis were *perpendicular* to the plane of the orbit, this circumstance would not affect the temperature, as the simplest experiment will show. Putting the equator of a globe on the outer edge of the table, and holding it perfectly *upright*, causing it to turn on its axis as it passes round the circle, it would be found that the light from the center of the table would illuminate just one half of the globe, at all times and in all positions, cutting the two poles. Did this movement correspond with that of nature, the days and nights would be always of the same length, and there would be no changes of the seasons, the warmest weather being nearest to the equator, and the cold increasing as the poles were approached. Nowhere, however, would the cold be so intense as it now is, nor would the heat be so great as at present, except at or quite near to the equator. The first fact would be owing to the regular return of the sun, once in twenty-four hours; the last to the oblique manner in which its rays struck this orb, in all places but near its center.

But the globe ought not to be made to move around the table with its axis perpendicular to its surface, or to the "plane of the earth's orbit." In point of fact, the earth is inclined to this plane, and the globe should be placed at a corresponding inclination. Let the globe be brought to the edge of the table, at its south side, and with its upper, or north pole inclining to the sun, and then commence the circuit, taking care always to keep this north pole of the globe pointing in the same direction, or to keep the globe itself in what we have termed a fixed attitude. As one half of the globe must always be in light, and the other half in darkness, this inclination from the perpendicular will bring the circle of light some distance beyond the north pole, when the globe is due-south from the light, and will leave an equal space around the opposite pole without any light at all, or any light directly received. Now it is that what we have termed the *fixed attitude* of the globe begins to tell. If the north pole inclined toward the orbit facing the rim of the table, the light would still cut the poles, the days and nights would still be equal, and there would be no changes in the seasons, though there would be a rival revolution of the globe by causing it to turn once a year, shifting the poles end for end. The inclination being to the surface of the table, or to the *plane* of the orbit, the phenomena that are known to exist are a consequence. Thus it is that the change in the seasons is as much owing to the fixed attitude of the earth in space, as we have chosen to term its polar directions, as to the inclination of its axis. Neither would produce the phenomena without the assistance of the other, as our experiment with the table will show.

Place, then, the globe at the south side of the rim of the table, with its axis inclining toward its surface, and its poles always pointing in the same general direction, not following the circuit of the orbit, and set it in motion toward the east, revolving rapidly on its axis as it moves. While directly south of the light, it would be found that the north pole would be illuminated, while no revolution on the axis would bring the south pole within the circle of the light. This is when a line drawn from the axis of the globe would cut the lamp, were the inclination brought as low as the surface of the table. Next set the globe in motion, following the rim of the table, and proceeding to the east or

right hand, keeping its axis always looking in the same general direction, or in an attitude that would be parallel to a north and south line drawn through the sun, were the inclination as low as the surface of the table.

This movement would be, in one sense, sideways, the circle of light gradually lessening around the north pole, and extending toward the south, as the globe proceeded east and north, diminishing the length of the days in the northern hemisphere, and increasing them in the southern. When at east, the most direct rays of the light would fall on the equator, and the light would cut the two poles, rendering the days and nights equal. As the globe moved north, the circle of light would be found to increase around the *south* pole, while none at all touched the *north*. When on the north side of the table, the *northern* pole of the globe would incline so far from the sun as to leave a space around it in shadow that would be of precisely the same size as had been the space of light when it was placed on the opposite side of the table. Going round the circle west, the same phenomena would be seen, until coming directly south of the lamp, the north pole would again come into light altogether, and the south equally into shadow.

Owing to this very simple but very wonderful provision of divine power and wisdom, this earth enjoys the relief of the changes in the seasons, as well as the variations in the length of the days. For one half the year, or from equinox to equinox, from the time when the globe is at a due-west point of the table until it reaches the east, the north pole would always receive the light, in a circle around it, that would gradually increase and diminish; and for the other half, the same would be true of the other hemisphere. Of course there is a precise point on the earth where this polar illumination ceases. The shape of the illuminated part is circular; and placing the point of a pencil on the globe at the extremest spot on the circle, holding it there while the globe is turned on its axis, the line made would just include the portions of the earth around the globe that thus receives the rays of the sun at midsummer. These lines compose what are termed the arctic and antarctic circles, with the last of which our legend has now a most serious connection. After all, we are by no means certain that we have made our meaning as obvious as we could wish, it being very difficult to explain phenomena of this nature clearly, without actually experimenting.

It is usual to say that there are six months day and six months night in the polar basins. This is true, literally, at the poles only; but, approximately, it is true as a whole. We apprehend that few persons—none, perhaps, but those who are in habits of study—form correct notions of the extent of what may be termed the icy seas. As the polar circles are in 23° 28″, a line drawn through the south pole, for instance, commencing on one side of the earth at the antarctic circle, and extending to the other, would traverse a distance materially exceeding that between New York and Lisbon. This would make those frozen regions cover a portion of this globe that is almost as large as the whole of the Atlantic Ocean, as far south as the equator. Any one can imagine what must be the influence of frost over so vast a surface, in reproducing itself, since the presence of icebergs is thought to affect our climate, when many of them drift far south in summer. As power produces power, riches wealth, so does cold produce cold. Fill then, in a certain degree, a space as large as the North Atlantic Ocean with ice in all its varieties, fixed, mountain and field, berg and floe, and one may get a tolerably accurate notion of the severity of its winters, when the sun is scarce seen above the horizon at all, and then only to shed its rays so obliquely as to be little better than a chill-looking orb of light, placed in the heavens simply to divide the day from the night.

This, then, was the region that Roswell Gardiner was so very anxious to leave; the winter he so much dreaded. Mary Pratt was before him, to say nothing of his duty to the deacon; while behind him was the vast polar ocean just described, about to be veiled in the freezing obscur-

ity of its long and gloomy twilight, if not of absolute night. No wonder, therefore, that when he trimmed his sails that evening, to beat out of the great bay, it was done with the earnestness with which we all perform duties of the highest import, when they are known to affect our well-being, visibly and directly. "Keep her a good full, Mr. Hazard," said Roswell, as he was leaving the deck, to take the first sleep in which he had indulged for four-and-twenty hours; "and let her go through the water. We are behind our time, and must keep in motion. Give me a call if anything like ice appears in a serious way."

Hazard "ay-ay'd" this order, as usual, buttoned his pea-jacket tighter than ever, and saw his young superior—the transcendental delicacy of the day is causing the difference in rank to be termed "*senior* and *junior*"—but Hazard saw *his* superior go below with a feeling allied to envy, so heavy were his eyelids with the want of rest. Stimson was in the first-mate's watch, and the latter approached that old sea-dog with a wish to keep himself awake by conversing.

"You seem as wide awake, king Stephen," the mate remarked, "as if you never felt drowsy!"

"This is not a part of the world for hammocks and berths, Mr. Hazard," was the reply. "I can get along, and must get along, with a quarter part of the sleep in these seas as would sarve me in a low latitude."

"And I feel as if I wanted all I can get. Them fellows look up well into our wake, Stephen."

"They do, indeed, sir, and they ought to do it; for we have been longer than is for our good in their'n."

"Well, now we have got a fresh start, I hope we may make a clear run of it. I saw no ice worth speaking of to the nor'ard here, before we made sail."

"Because you see'd none, Mr. Hazard, is no proof there is none. Floe-ice can't be seen at any great distance, though its blink may. But it seems to me, it's all blink in these here seas!"

"There you're quite right, Stephen; for turn which way you will, the horizon has a show of that sort——"

"Starboard!" called out the lookout forward—"keep her away—keep her away—there is ice ahead."

"Ice in here!" exclaimed Hazard, springing forward—"That is more than we bargained for! Where away is your ice, Smith?"

"Off here, sir, on our weather bow—and a mortal big field of it—jist sich a chap as nipped the Vineyard *Lion*, when she first came in to join us. Sich a fellow as that would take the sap out of our bends, as a squeezer takes the juice from a lemon!"

Smith was a carpenter by trade, which was probably the reason why he introduced this figure. Hazard saw the ice with regret, for he had hoped to work the schooner fairly out to sea in his watch; but the field was getting down through the passage in a way that threatened to cut off the exit of the two schooners from the bay. Daggett kept close in his wake, a proof that this experienced navigator in such waters saw no means to turn farther to windward. As the wind was now abeam, both vessels drove rapidly ahead; and in half an hour the northern point of the land they had so lately left came into view close aboard of them. Just then the moon rose, and objects became more clearly visible.

Hazard hailed the Vineyard *Lion* and demanded what was to be done. It was possible, by hauling close on a wind, to pass the cape a short distance to windward of it, and seemingly thus clear the floe. Unless this were done both vessels would be compelled to wear, and run for the southern passage, which would carry them many miles to leeward, and might place them a long distance on the wrong side of the group.

"Is Captain Gar'ner on deck?" asked Daggett, who had now drawn close up on the lee-quarter of his consort, Hazard having brailed his foresail and laid his topsail sharp aback, to enable him to do so—"If he isn't, I'd advise you to give him a call at once."

This was done immediately; and while

it was doing the Vineyard *Lion* swept past the Oyster Pond schooner. Roswell announced his presence on deck just as the other vessel cleared his bows.

"There's no time to consult, Gar'ner," answered Daggett. "There's our road before us. Go through it we must, or stay where we are until that field-ice gives us a jam down yonder in the crescent. I will lead, and you can follow as soon as your eyes are open."

One glance let Roswell into the secret of his situation. He liked it little, but he did not hesitate.

"Fill the topsail and haul aft the foresheet," were the quiet orders that proclaimed what he intended to do.

Both vessels stood on. By some secret process every man on board the two craft became aware of what was going on, and appeared on deck. All hands were not called, nor was there any particular noise to attract attention; but the word had been whispered below that there was a great risk to run. A risk it was, of a verity! It was necessary to stand close along that iron-bound coast where the seals had so lately resorted, for a distance of several miles. The wind would not admit of the schooners steering much more than a cable's length from the rocks for quite a league; after which the shore trended to the southward, and a little sea-room would be gained. But on those rocks the waves were then beating heavily, and their bellowings as they rolled into the cavities were at almost all times terrific. There was some relief, however, in the knowledge obtained of the shore, by having frequently passed up and down it in the boats. It was known that the water was deep close to the visible rocks, and that there was no danger so long as a vessel could keep off them.

No one spoke. Every eye was strained to discern objects ahead, or was looking astern to trace the expected collision between the ice-floe and the low promontory of the cape. The ear soon gave notice that this meeting had already taken place; for the frightful sound that attended the cracking and rending of the field might have been heard fully a league. Now it was that each schooner did her best. Yards were braced up, sheets flattened, and the helm tended. The close proximity of the rocks on the one side, and the secret presentiment of there being more field-ice on the other, kept every one wide awake. The two masters, in particular, were all eyes and ears. It was getting to be very cold; and the sort of shelter aloft that goes by the quaint name of "crow's-nest," had been fitted up in each vessel. A mate was now sent into each, to ascertain what might be discovered to windward. Almost at the same instant these young seamen hailed their respective decks, and gave notice that a wide field was coming in upon them, and must eventually crush them unless avoided. This startling intelligence reached the two commanders in the same moment. The emergency demanded decision, and each man acted for himself. Roswell ordered his helm put *down*, and his schooner *tacked*. The water was not rough enough to prevent the success of the maneuver. On the other hand, Daggett kept a rap full, and *stood on*. Roswell manifested the most judgment and seamanship. He was now far enough from the cape to beat to windward; and, by going nearer to the enemy, he might always run along its southern boundary, profit by any opening, and would be by as much as he could thus gain to windward of the coast. Daggett had one advantage. By standing on, in the event of a return becoming necessary, he would gain in time. In ten minutes the two schooners were a mile asunder. We shall first follow that of Roswell Gardiner's in his attempt to escape.

The first floe, which was ripping and tearing one of its angles into fragments, as it came grinding down on the cape, soon compelled the vessel to tack. Making short reaches, Roswell ere long found himself fully a mile to windward of the rocks, and sufficiently near to the new floe to discern its shape, drift, and general character. Its eastern end had lodged upon the field that first came in, and was adding to the vast momentum with which that enormous floe was pressing down

upon the cape. Large as was the first visitor to the bay, this was of at least twice if not of thrice its dimensions. What gave Roswell the most concern was the great distance that this field extended to the westward. He went up into the crow's-nest himself, and aided by the light of a most brilliant moon, and a sky without a cloud, he could perceive the blink of ice in that direction, as he fancied, for fully two leagues. What was unusual, perhaps, at that early season of the year, these floes did not consist of a vast collection of numberless cakes of ice; but the whole field, so far as could then be ascertained, was firm and united. The nights were now so cold that ice made fast wherever there was water; and it occurred to our young master that, possibly, fragments that had once been separated and broken by the waves, might have become reunited by the agency of the frost. Roswell descended from the crow's-nest half chilled by a cutting wind, though it blew from a warm quarter. Summoning his mates, he asked their advice.

"It seems to me, Captain Gar'ner," Hazard replied, "there's very little choice. Here we are, so far as I can make it out, embayed, and we have only to box about until daylight comes, when some chance may turn up to help us. If so, we must turn it to account; if not, we must make up our minds to winter here."

This was coolly and calmly said; though it was clear enough that Hazard was quite in earnest.

"You forget there may be an open passage to the westward, Mr. Hazard," Roswell rejoined, "and that we may yet pass out to sea by it. Captain Daggett is already out of sight in the western board, and we may do well to stand on after him."

"Ay, ay, sir—I know all that, Captain Gar'ner, and it may be as you say; but when I was aloft, half an hour since, if there wasn't the blink of ice in that direction, quite round to the back of the island, there wasn't the blink of ice nowhere hereabouts. I'm used to the sight of it, and can't well be mistaken."

"There is always ice on that side of the land, Hazard, and you may have seen the blink of the bergs which have hugged the cliffs in that quarter all summer. Still that is not proving we shall find no outlet. This craft can go through a very small passage, and we must take care and find one in proper time. Wintering here is out of the question. A *hundred* reasons tell us not to think of such a thing, besides the interests of our owners. We are walking along this floe pretty fast, though I think the vessel is too much by the head; don't it strike you so, Hazard?"

"Lord, sir, it's nothing but the ice that has made, and is making for'ard! Before we got so near the field as to find a better lee, the little lipper that came athwart our bows froze almost as soon as it wet us. I do suppose, sir, there are now several tons of ice on our bows, counting from channel to channel, forward."

On an examination this proved to be true, and the knowledge of the circumstance did not at all contribute to Gardiner's feeling of security. He saw there was no time to be lost, and he crowded sail with a view of forcing the vessel past the dangers if possible, and of getting her into a milder climate. But even a fast-sailing schooner will scarcely equal our wishes under such circumstances. There was no doubt that the *Sea Lion's* speed was getting to be affected by the manner in which her bows were weighed down by ice, in addition to the discomfort produced by cold, damp, and the presence of a slippery substance on the deck and rigging. Fortunately there was not much spray flying, or matters would have been much worse. As it was, they were bad enough, and very ominous of future evil.

While the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond was running along the margin of the ice in the manner just described, and after the blink to the westward had changed to a visible field, making it very uncertain whether an egress was to be found in that quarter or not, an opening suddenly appeared trending to the northward, and sufficiently wide, as Roswell thought, to enable him to beat through it. Putting

his helm down, his schooner came heavily round, and was filled on a course that soon carried her half a mile into this passage. At first, everything seemed propitious, the channel rather opening than otherwise, while the course was such—north-northwest—as enabled the vessel to make very long legs on one tack, and that the best. After going about four or five times, however, all these flattering symptoms suddenly changed, by the passage terminating in a *cul de sac*. Almost at the same instant the ice closed rapidly in the schooner's wake. An effort was made to run back, but it failed in consequence of an enormous floe's turning on its center having met resistance from a field closer in, that was, in its turn, stopped by the rocks. Roswell saw at once that nothing could be done at the moment. He took in all his canvas, as well as the frozen cloth could be handled, got out ice-anchors and hauled his vessel into a species of cove where there would be the least danger of a nip, should the fields continue to close.

All this time Daggett was as busy as a bee. He rounded the headland, and flattered himself that he was about to slip past all the rocks and get out into open water, when the vast fields of which the blink had been seen even by those in the other vessel, suddenly stretched themselves across his course in a way that set at defiance all attempts to go any further in that direction. Daggett wore round and endeavored to return. This was by no means so easy as it was to go down before the wind, and his bows were also much encumbered with ice; more so, indeed, than those of the other schooner. Once or twice his craft missed stays in consequence of getting so much by the head, and it was deemed necessary to heave-to and take to the axes. A great deal of extra and cumbrous weight was gotten rid of, but an hour of most precious time was lost.

By the time Daggett was ready to make sail again, he found his return round the headland was entirely cut off, by the field's having come in absolute contact with the rocks.

It was now midnight, and the men on board both vessels required rest. A watch was set in each, and most of the people were permitted to turn in. Of course proper lookouts were had, but the light of the moon was not sufficiently distinct to render it safe to make any final efforts under its favor. No great alarm was felt, there being nothing unusual in the vessel's being embayed in the ice; and so long as she was not nipped or pressed upon by actual contact, the position was thought safe rather than the reverse. It was desirable, moreover, for the schooners to communicate with each other; for some advantage might be known to one of the masters that was concealed by distance from his companion. Without concert, therefore, Roswell and Daggett came to the same general conclusions, and waited patiently.

The day came at last, cold and dreary, though not altogether without the relief of an air that blew from regions far warmer than the ocean over which it was now traveling. Then the two schooners became visible from each other, and Roswell saw the jeopardy of Daggett, and Daggett saw the jeopardy of Roswell. The vessels were little more than a mile apart, but the situation of the Vineyard *Lion* was much the most critical. She had made fast to the floe, but her support itself was in a steady and most imposing motion. As soon as Roswell saw the manner in which his consort was surrounded, and the very threatening aspect of the danger that pressed upon him, his first impulse was to hasten to him, with a party of his own people, to offer any assistance he could give. After looking at the ice immediately around his own craft, where all seemed to be right, he called over the names of six of his men, ordered them to eat a warm breakfast, and to prepare to accompany him.

In twenty minutes, Roswell was leading his little party across the ice, each man carrying an ax, or some other implement that it was supposed might be of use. It was by no means difficult to proceed; for the surface of the floe, one seemingly more than a league in extent, was quite

smooth, and the snow on it was crusted to a strength that would have borne a team.

"The water between the ice and the rocks is a much narrower strip than I had thought," said Roswell, to his constant attendant Stimson. "Here it does not appear to be a hundred yards in width."

"Nor is it, sir—whew—this trotting in so cold a climate makes a man puff like a whale blowing—but, Captain Gar'ner, that schooner will be cut in two before we can get to her. Look, sir; the floe has reached the rocks already, quite near her, and it does not stop the drift at all, seemingly."

Roswell made no reply; the state of the Vineyard *Lion* did appear to be much more critical than he had previously imagined. Until he came nearer to the land, he had formed no notion of the steady power with which the field was setting down on the rocks on which the broken fragments were now creeping like creatures endowed with life. Occasionally, there would be loud disruptions, and the movement of the floe would become more rapid; then, again, a sort of pause would succeed, and for a moment the approaching party felt a gleam of hope. But all expectations of this sort were doomed to be disappointed.

"Look, sir," exclaimed Stimson—"she went down afore it twenty fathoms at that one set. She must be awful near the rocks, sir."

All the men now stopped. They knew they were powerless; and intense anxiety rendered them averse to move. Attention appeared to interfere with their walking on the ice; and each held his breath in expectation. They saw that the schooner, then less than a cable's length from them, was close to the rocks; and the next shock, if anything like the last, must overwhelm her. To their astonishment, instead of being nipped, the schooner rose by a stately movement that was not without grandeur, upheld by broken cakes that had got beneath her bottom, and fairly reached the shelf of rocks almost unharmed. Not a man had left her; but there she was, placed on the shore, some twenty feet above the surface of the sea, on rocks worn smooth by the action of the waves! Had the season been propitious, and did the injury stop here, it might have been possible to get the craft into the water again, and still carry her to America.

But the floe was not yet arrested. Cake succeeded cake, one riding over another, until a wall of ice rose along the shore, that Roswell and his companions, with all their activity and courage, had great difficulty in crossing. They succeeded in getting over it, however; but when they reached the unfortunate schooner, she was literally buried. The masts were broken, the sails torn, rigging scattered, and sides stove. The *Sea Lion* of Martha's Vineyard was a worthless wreck—worthless as to all purposes but that of being converted into materials for a smaller craft, or to be used as fuel.

All this had been done in ten minutes! Then it was that the vast superiority of Nature over the resources of man made itself apparent. The people of the two vessels stood aghast with this sad picture of their own insignificance before their eyes. The crew of the wreck, it is true, had escaped without difficulty; the movement having been as slow and steady as it was irresistible. But there they were, in the clothes they had on, with all their effects buried under piles of ice that were already thirty or forty feet in height.

"She looks as if she was built there, Gar'ner!" Daggett coolly observed, as he stood regarding the scene with eyes as intently riveted on the wreck as human organs were ever fixed on any object. "Had a man told me this *could* happen, I would not have believed him!"

"Had she been a three-decker, this ice would have treated her in the same way. There is a force in such a field that walls of stone could not withstand."

"Captain Gar'ner—Captain Gar'ner," called out Stimson, hastily; "we'd better go back, sir; our own craft is in danger. She is drifting fast in toward the cape, and may reach it afore we can get to her!"

Sure enough, it was so. In one of the changes that are so unaccountable among the ice, the floe had taken a sudden and

powerful direction toward the entrance of the Great Bay. It was probably owing to the circumstance that the inner field had forced its way past the cape, and made room for its neighbor to follow. A few of Daggett's people, with Daggett himself, remained to see what might yet be saved from the wreck; but all the rest of the men started for the cape, toward which the Oyster Pond craft was now directly setting. The distance was less than a league; and, as yet, there was not much snow on the rocks. By taking an upper shelf, it was possible to make pretty good progress; and such was the manner of Roswell's present march.

It was an extraordinary sight to see the coast along which our party was hastening, just at that moment. As the cakes of ice were broken from the field, they were driven upward by the vast pressure from without, and the whole line of the shore seemed as if alive with creatures that were issuing from the ocean to clamber on the rocks. Roswell had often seen that very coast peopled with seals, as it now appeared to be in activity with fragments of ice, that were writhing, and turning, and rising, one upon another, as if possessed of the vital principle.

In half an hour Roswell and his party reached the house. The schooner was then less than half a mile from the spot, still setting in, along with the outer field, but not nipped. So far from being in danger of such a calamity, the little basin in which she lay had expanded instead of closing; and it would have been possible to handle a quick-working craft in it, under her canvas. An exit, however, was quite out of the question; there being no sign of any passage to or from that icy dock. There the craft still lay, anchored to the weather-floe, while the portion of her crew which remained on board was as anxiously watching the coast as those who were on the coast watched her. At first, Roswell gave his schooner up; but on closer examination found reason to hope that she might pass the rocks, and enter the inner, rather than the Great Bay.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"To prayer;—for the glorious sun is gone,
And the gathering darkness of night comes on;
Like a curtain from God's kind hand it flows,
To shade the couch where his children repose.
Then kneel, while the watching stars are bright,
And give your last thoughts to the guardian of night."
—WARE.

DESOLATE, indeed, and nearly devoid of hope, had the situation of our sealers now become. It was midday, and it was freezing everywhere in the shade. A bright genial sun was shedding its glorious rays on the icy panorama; but it was so obliquely as to be of hardly any use in dispelling the frosts. Far as the eye could see, even from the elevation of the cape, there was nothing but ice, with the exception of that part of the Great Bay into which the floe had not yet penetrated. To the southward there stood clustering around the passage a line of gigantic bergs, placed like sentinels, as if purposely to stop all egress in that direction. The water had lost its motion in the shift of the wind, and new ice had formed over the whole bay, as was evident by a white sparkling line that preceded the irresistible march of the floe.

As Roswell gazed on this scene, serious doubts darkened his mind as to his escaping from this frozen chain until the return of another summer. It is true that a south wind might possibly produce a change, and carry away the blockading mass; but every moment rendered this so much the less probable. Winter, or what would be deemed winter in most regions, was already setting in; and should the ice really become stationary in and around the group, all hope of its moving must vanish for the next eight months.

Daggett reached the house about an hour before sunset. He had succeeded in cutting a passage through the ice as far as the cabin-door of his unfortunate schooner, when there was no difficulty in descending into the interior parts of the vessel. The whole party came in staggering under heavy loads. Pretty much as a matter of course, each man brought his own effects. Clothes, tobacco, rum, small-stores, bedding, quad-

rants, and similar property, was that first attended to. At that moment, little was thought of the skins and oil. The cargo was neglected, while the minor articles had been eagerly sought.

Roswell was on board his own schooner, now again in dangerous proximity to the cape. She was steadily setting in when Daggett rejoined him. The crew of the lost vessel remained in the house, where they lighted a fire and deposited their goods, returning to the wreck for another load, taking the double sets of wheels along with them. When the two masters met they conferred together earnestly, receiving into their councils such of the officers as were on board. The security of the remaining vessel was now all-important; and it was not to be concealed that she was in imminent jeopardy. The course taken by the floe was directly toward the most rugged part of Cape Hazard; and the rate of the movement such as to threaten a very speedy termination of the matter. There was one circumstance, however, and only that one, which offered a single chance to escape.

The opening around the schooner still existed in part, about half of it having been lost in the collision with the outermost point of the rocks. It was this species of vacuum that, by removing all resistance at that particular spot, indeed, had given the field its most dangerous cant, turning the movement of the vessel toward the rocks. The chance, therefore, existed in the possibility—and it was little more than a bare possibility—of moving the schooner in that small area of open water, and of taking her far enough south to clear the most southern extremity of the wall of stone that protected the cove. As yet, this open water did not extend far enough to admit of the schooner's being taken to the point in question; but it was slowly tending in that direction, and did not the basin close altogether ere that desirable object was achieved, the vessel might yet be saved. In order, however, to do this, it would be necessary to cut a sort of dock or slip in the ice of the cove, into which the craft might shoot, as a place of refuge. Once within the cove, fairly behind the point of the rocks, there would be perfect safety; if suffered to drift to the southward of that shelter, this schooner would probably be lost like her consort, and very much in the same manner.

Gardiner now sent a gang of hands to the desired point, armed with saws, and the slip was commenced. The ice in the cove was still only two or three inches thick, and the work went bravely on. Instead of satisfying himself with cutting a passage merely behind the point of rock, Hazard opened one quite up into the cove, to the precise place where the schooner had so long been at anchor. Just as the sun was setting, the crisis arrived. So heavy had been the movement toward the rock, that Roswell saw he could delay no longer. Were he to continue where he was, a projection on the cape would prevent his passage to the entrance of the cove; he would be shut in, and he might be certain that the *Sea Lion* would be crushed if the floe pressed home on the shore. The ice-anchors were cut out accordingly, the jib was hoisted, and the schooner wore short round on her heel. The space between the floe and the projection in the rocks just named did not now exceed a hundred feet; and it was lessening fast. Much more room existed on each side of this particular excrescence in the rugged coast, the space north being still considerable, while that to the southward might be a hundred yards in width; the former of these areas being owing to the form of the basin, and the latter to the shape of the shore.

In the first of the basins named the schooner wore short round on her heel, her foresail being set to help her. A breathless moment passed as she ran down toward the narrow strait. It was quickly reached, and that none too soon; the opening now not exceeding sixty feet. The yards of the vessel almost brushed the rocks in passing; but she went clear. As soon as in the lower basin, as one might call it, the jib and foresail were taken in, and the head of the mainsail was got on the craft. This helped her to luff up toward the slip, which she reached

under sufficient headway fairly to enter it. Lines were thrown to the people on the ice, who soon hauled the schooner up to the head of her frozen dock. Three cheers broke spontaneously out of the throats of the men, as they thus achieved the step which assured them of the safety of the vessel so far as the ice was concerned! In this way do we estimate our advantages and disadvantages by comparison. In the abstract, the situation of the sealers was still sufficiently painful; though compared with what it would have been with the other schooner wrecked, it was security itself.

By this time it was quite dark; and a day of excitement and fatigue required a night of rest. After supping, the men turned in; the Vineyarders mostly in the house, where they occupied their old bunks. When the moon rose, the party from the wreck arrived with their carts well loaded, and themselves half frozen, notwithstanding their toil. In a short time all were buried in sleep.

When Roswell Gardiner came on deck next morning his first glance told him how little was the chance of his party's returning north that season. The strange floe had driven into the Great Bay, completely covering its surface, lining the shores far and near with broken and glittering cakes of ice; and, as it were, hermetically sealing the place against all egress. New ice, an inch or two thick, or even six or eight inches thick, might have been sawed through, and a passage cut even for a league, should it be necessary. Such things were sometimes done, and great as would have been the toil, our sealers would have attempted it, in preference to running the risk of passing a winter in that region. But almost desperate as would have been even that source of refuge, the party was completely cut off from its possession. To think of sawing through ice as thick as that of the floe, for any material distance, would be like a project to tunnel the Alps.

Melancholy was the meeting between Roswell and Daggett that morning. The former was too manly and generous to indulge in reproaches, else might he well have told the last that all this was owing to him. There is a singular propensity in us all to throw the burden of our own blunders on the shoulders of other folk. Roswell had a little of this weakness, overlooking the fact that he was his own master; and as he had come to the group by himself, he ought to have left it in the same manner, as soon as his own particular task was accomplished. But Roswell did not see this quite as distinctly as he saw the fact that Daggett's detentions and indirect appeals to his better feelings had involved him in all these difficulties. Still, while thus he felt, he made no complaint.

All hope of getting north that season now depended on the field-ice drifting away from the Great Bay before it got fairly frozen in. So jammed and crammed with it did every part of the bay appear to be, however, that little could be expected from that source of relief. This Daggett admitted in the conversation he held with Roswell, as soon as the latter joined him on the rocky terrace beneath the house.

"The wisest thing we can do, then," replied our hero, "will be to make as early preparations as possible to meet the winter. If we are to remain here, a day gained now will be worth a week a month hence. If we should happily escape, the labor thus expended will not kill us."

"Quite true—very much as you say, certainly," answered Daggett, musing. "I was thinking as you came ashore, Gar'ner, if a lucky turn might not be made in this wise: I have a good many skins in the wreck, you see, and you have a good deal of ile in your hold—now, by starting some of that ile, and pumping it out, and shooking the casks, room might be made aboard of you for all my skins. I think we could run all of the last over on them wheels in the course of a week."

"Captain Daggett, it is by yielding so much to your skins that we have got into all this trouble."

"Skins, measure for measure, in the way of tonnage, will bring a great deal more than ile."

Roswell smiled, and muttered some-

thing to himself, a little bitterly. He was thinking of the grievous disappointment and prolonged anxiety that, it pained him to believe, Mary would feel at his failure to return home at the appointed time; though it would probably have pained him more to believe she would not thus be disappointed and anxious. Here his displeasure, or its manifestation, ceased; and the young man turned his thoughts on the present necessities of his situation.

Daggett appearing very earnest on the subject of removing his skins before the snows came to impede the path, Roswell could urge no objections that would be likely to prevail; but his acquiescence was obtained by means of a hint from Stimson, who by this time had gained his officer's ear.

"Let him do it, Captain Gar'ner," said the boat-steerer, in an aside, speaking respectfully, but earnestly. "He'll never stow 'em in our hold, this season at least; but they'll make excellent filling-in for the sides of this hut."

"You think then, Stephen, that we are likely to pass the winter here?"

"We are in the hands of Divine Providence, sir, which will do with us as seems the best in the eyes of never-failing wisdom. At all events, Captain Gar'ner, I think 'twill be safest to act at once as if we had the winter afore us. In my judgment, this house might be made a good deal more comfortable for us all, in such a case, than our craft; for we should not only have more room, but might have as many fires as we want, and more than we can find fuel for."

"Ay, there's the difficulty, Stephen. Where are we to find wood, throughout a polar winter, for even one fire?"

"We must be saving, sir, and thoughtful, and keep ourselves warm as much as we can by exercise. I have had a taste of this once, in a small way, already; and know what ought to be done, in many partic'lars. In the first place, the men must keep themselves as clean as water will make them—dirt is a great helper of cold—and the water must be just as frosty as human natur' can bear it. This will set everything into actyve movement inside, and bring out warmth from the heart, as it might be. That's my principle of keeping warm, Captain Gar'ner."

"I dare say it may be a pretty good one, Stephen," answered Roswell, "and we'll bear it in mind. As for stoves, we are well enough off, for there is one in the house, and a good large one it is; then, there is a stove in each cabin, and there are the two cabooses. If we had fuel for them all, I should feel no concern on the score of warmth."

"Ther's the wrack, sir. By cutting her up at once we should get wood enough, in my judgment, to see it out."

Roswell made no reply; but he looked intently at the boat-steerer for half a minute. The idea was new to him; and the more he thought on the subject, the greater was the confidence it gave him in the result. Daggett, he well knew, would not consent to the mutilation of his schooner, wreck as it was, so long as the most remote hope existed of getting her again into the water. The tenacity with which this man clung to property was like that which is imputed to the life of the cat; and it was idle to expect any concessions from him on a subject like that. Nevertheless, necessity is a hard master; and if the question were narrowed down to one of burning the materials of a vessel that was in the water, and in good condition, and of burning those of one that was out of the water, with holes cut through her bottom in several places, and otherwise so situated as to render repairs extremely difficult, if not impossible, even Daggett would be compelled to submit to circumstances.

It was accordingly suggested to the people of the Vineyard *Lion* that they could do no better than to begin at once to remove everything they could come at, and which could be transported from the wreck to the house. As there was little to do on board the vessel afloat, her crew cheerfully offered to assist in this labor. The days were shortening sensibly and fast, and no time was to be lost, the distance being so great as to make two trips a day a matter of great labor. No sooner was the plan adopted, therefore, than

steps were taken to set about its execution.

It is unnecessary for us to dwell minutely on everything that occurred during the succeeding week or ten days. The wind shifted to southwest the very day that the *Sea Lion* got back into her little harbor; and this seemed to put a sudden check on the pressure of the vast floe. Nevertheless, there was no counter-movement, the ice remaining in the Great Bay seemingly as firmly fastened as if it had originally been made there. Notwithstanding this shift of the wind to a cold point of the compass, the thermometer rose, and it thawed freely about the middle of the day, in all places to which the rays of the sun had access. This enabled the men to work with more comfort than they could have done in the excessively severe weather, as it was found that respiration became difficult when it was so very cold.

Access was now obtained to the wreck by cutting a regular passage to the main hatch through the ice. The schooner stood nearly upright, sustained by fragments of the floe; and there were extensive caverns all around her, produced by the random manner in which the cakes had come up out of their proper element like so many living things. Among these caverns one might have wandered for miles without once coming out into the open air, though they were cold and cheerless, and had little to attract the adventurer after the novelty was abated.

In rising from the water the schooner had been roughly treated, but once sustained by the ice her transit had been easy and tolerably safe. Several large cakes lay on or over her, sustained more by other cakes that rested on the rocks than by the timbers of the vessel herself. These cakes formed a sort of roof, and, as they did not drip, they served to make a shelter against the wind; for, at the point where the wreck lay, the southwest gales came howling round the base of the mountain, piercing the marrow itself in the bones. At the hut it was very different. There the heights made a lee that extended all over the cape, and for some distance to the westward; while the whole power the sun possessed in that high latitude was cast, very obliquely it is true, but clearly, and without any other drawback than its position in the ecliptic, fairly on the terrace, the hut above, and the rocks around it. On the natural terrace, indeed, it was still pleasant to walk and work, and even to sit for a few hours in the middle of the day; for winter was not yet come in earnest in that frozen world.

One of Roswell's first objects was to transport most of the eatables from the wreck; for he foresaw the need there would be for everything of the sort. Neither vessel had laid in a stock of provisions for a longer period than about twelve months, of which nearly half were now gone. This allowance applied to salted meats and bread, which are usually regarded as the base of a ship's stores. There were several barrels of flour, a few potatoes, a large quantity of onions, a few barrels of cornmeal, or "injin," as it is usually termed in American parlance, an entire barrel of pickled cucumbers, another about half full of cabbage preserved in the same way, and an entire barrel of molasses. In addition, there was a cask of whiskey, a little wine and brandy to be used medicinally, sugar, brown, whitey-brown, and brownywhite, and a pretty fair allowance of tea and coffee; the former being a Hyson-skin, and the latter San Domingo of no very high quality. Most of these articles were transported from the wreck to the house in the course of the few days that succeeded, though Daggett insisted on a certain portion of the supplies being left in his stranded craft.

Not until this was done would Roswell listen to any proposal of Daggett's to transfer the skins. Twice during these few days, indeed, did the Vineyard master come to a pause in his proceedings, as the weather grew milder, and gleams of a hope of being able to get away that season crossed his mind. On the last of these occasions of misgivings, Roswell was compelled to lead his brother master up on the plain of the island, to an elevation of some three hundred feet above the

level of the ocean, and more than half that distance higher than the house, and point out to him a panorama of field-ice that the eye could not command. Until that vast plain opened, or became riven by the joint action of the agitated ocean and the warmth of a sun from which the rays did not glance away from the frozen surface, like light obliquely received and as obliquely reflected from a mirror, it was useless to think of releasing even the uninjured vessel; much less that which lay riven and crushed on the rocks.

"Were every cake of this ice melted into water, Daggett," Roswell continued, "it would not float off your schooner. The best supplied shipyard in America could hardly furnish the materials for ways to launch her; and I never knew of a vessel's being dropped into the water some twenty feet nearly perpendicular."

"I don't know that," answered Daggett stoutly. "See what they're doing nowadays, and think nothing of it. I have seen a whole row of brick houses turned round by the use of jack-screws; and one building actually taken down a hill much higher than the distance you name. Commodore Rodgers has just hauled a heavy frigate out of the water, and means to put her back again, when he has done with her. What has been done once can be done twice. I do not like giving up 'till I'm forced to it."

"That is plain enough, Captain Daggett," returned Roswell, smiling. "That you are game, no one can deny; but it will all come to nothing. Neither Commodore Rodgers nor Commodore anybody else could put your craft into the water again without something to do it with."

"You think it would be asking too much to take your schooner, and go across to the main next season a'ter timber to make ways?" put in Daggett, inquiringly. "She stands up like a church, and nothing would be easier than to lay down ways under her bottom."

"Or more difficult than to make them of any use, after you had put them there. No, no, my good sir, you must think no more of this; though it may be possible to make a cover for the cargo, and return and recover it all, by freighting a craft from Rio, on our way north."

Daggett gave a quick, inquisitive glance at his companion, and Roswell's color mounted to his cheeks; for, while he really thought the plan just mentioned quite feasible, he was conscious of foreseeing that it might be made the means of throwing off his troublesome companion, as he himself drew near to the West Indies and their keys.

This terminated the discussion for the time. Both of the masters busied themselves in carrying on the duty which had now fallen into a regular train. As much of the interest of what is to be related will depend on what was done in these few days, it may be well to be a little more explicit in stating the particulars.

The reader will understand that the house, of which so much had already been made by our mariners, was nothing but a shell. It had a close roof, one that effectually turned water, and its siding, though rough, was tight and rather thicker than is usual; being made of common inch boards, roughly planed, and originally painted red. There were four very tolerable windows, and a decent substantial floor of planed plank. All this had been well put together, rather more attention than is often bestowed on such structures having been paid by the carpenter to the cracks and joints on account of the known sharpness of the climate, even in the warm months. Still, all this made a mere shell. The marrow-freezing winds which would soon come—had indeed come—might be arrested by such a covering, it is true; but the little needle-like particles of the frost would penetrate such a shelter, as their counterparts of steel pierce cloth. It was a matter of life and death, therefore, to devise means to exclude the cold, in order that the vital heat might be kept in circulation during the tremendous season that was known to be approaching.

Stimson had much to say on the subject of the arrangements taken. He was the oldest man in the two crews, and the most experienced sealer. It happened

that he had once passed a winter at Orange Harbor, in the immediate vicinity of Cape Horn. It is true that it is an inhabited country, if the poor degraded creatures who dwell there can be termed inhabitants; and has its trees and vegetation, such as they are. The difference between Orange Harbor and Sealer's Land, in this respect, must be something like that which all the traveling world knows to exist between a winter's residence at the Hospital of the Great St. Bernard, and a winter's residence at one of the villages a few leagues lower down the mountain. At Sealer's Land, if there was literally no vegetation, there was so little as scarcely to deserve the name. Of fuel there was none, with the exception of that which had been brought there. Nevertheless, the experience of a winter passed in such a place as Orange Harbor must count for a great deal. Cape Horn is in nearly 56°, and Sealer's Land—we may as well admit this much—is by no means 10° to the southward of that. There must be a certain general resemblance in the climates of the two places; and he who had gone through a winter at one of them must have had a very tolerable foretaste of what was to be suffered at the other. This particular experience, therefore, added to his general knowledge, as well as to his character, contributed largely to Stephen's influence in the consultations that took place between the two masters, at which he was usually present.

"It's useless to be playing off in an affair like this, Captain Gar'ner," said Stephen, on one occasion. "Away from this spot all the navies of the 'arth could not now carry us, until God's sun comes back in his course to drive the winter afore it. I have my misgivin's, gentlemen, touching this great floe that has got jammed in among these islands, whether it will ever move ag'in; for I don't think its coming in here is a common matter."

"In which case, what would become of us, Stephen?"

"Why, sir, we should be at God's mercy then, jist as we be now; or would be, was we on the east eend itself. I won't say that two resolute and strong arms might not cut a way through for one little craft like our'n, if they had summer fully afore 'em, and know'd they was a-workin' toward a fri'nd instead of toward an inimy. There's a great deal in the last; every man is encouraged when he thinks he's nearer to the eend of his journey a'ter a hard day's work, than he was when he set out in the mornin'. But to undertake sich an expedition at this season would be sartain destruction. No, sir; all we can do now is to lay up for the winter, and that with great care and prudence. We must turn ourselves into so many ants, and show their forethought and care."

"What would you recommend as our first step, Stimson?" asked Daggett, who had been an attentive listener.

"I would advise, sir, to begin hardening the men as soon as I could. We have too much fire in the stove, both for our stock of wood and for the good of the people. Make the men sleep under fewer clothes, and don't let any on 'em hang about the galley fire, as some on 'em love to do, even now, most desperately. Them 'ere men will be good for nothin' ten weeks hence, unless they're taken off the fires, as a body would take off a pot or a kettle, and are set out to harden."

"This is a process that may be easier advised than peformed, perhaps," Roswell quietly observed.

"Don't you believe that, Captain Gar'ner. I've known the most shiverin', smoke-dried hands in a large crew hardened and brought to an edge, a'ter a little trouble, as a body would temper an ax with steel. The first thing to be done is to make 'em scrub one another every mornin' in cold water. This gives a life to the skin that acts much the same as a suit of clothes. Yes, gentlemen; put a fellow in a tub for a minute or two of a mornin', and you may do almost anything you please with him all day a'terward. One pail of water is as good as a pea-jacket. And above all things, keep the stove clear. The cooks should be told not to drive their fires so hard; and we can do without the stove in the sleeping-room a great deal better now than most on us think. It will help to save much

wood, if we begin at once to calk and thicken our siding, and make the house warmer. Was the hut in good state, we might do without any other fire than that in the caboose for two months yet."

Such was the general character of Stephen's counsel, and very good advice it was. Not only did Roswell adopt the scrubbing process, which enabled him to throw aside a great many clothes in the course of a week, but he kept aloft from the fires, to harden, as Stimson had called it. That which was thus enforced by example was additionally enjoined by precept. Several large, hulking, idle fellows, who greatly loved the fire, were driven away from it by shame; and the heat was allowed to diffuse itself more equally through the building.

Any one who has ever had occasion to be a witness of the effect of the water-cure process in enabling even delicate women to resist cold and damp, may form some notion of the great improvement that was made among our sealers, by adopting and rigidly adhering to Stimson's cold-water and no-fire system. Those who had shivered at the very thoughts of ice-water, soon dabbled in it like young ducks; and there was scarcely an hour in the day when the half-hogshead, that was used as a bath, had not its tenant. This tub was placed on the ice of the cove, with a tent over it; and a well was made through which the water was drawn. Of course, the ax was in great request, a new hole being required each morning, and sometimes two or three times in the course of the day. The effect of these ablutions was very soon apparent. The men began to throw aside their pea-jackets, and worked in their ordinary clothing, which was warm and suited to a high latitude, with a spirit and vigor at which they were themselves surprised. The fire in the caboose sufficed as yet; and, at evening, the pea-jacket, with the shelter of the building, the crowded rooms, and the warm meals, for a long time enabled them to get on without consuming anything in the largest stove. Stimson's plans for the protection of the hut, moreover, soon began to tell. The skins, sails, and much of the rigging were brought over from the wreck; by means of the carts, so long as there was no snow, and by means of sledges when the snow fell and rendered wheeling difficult. Luckily, the position of the road along the rocks caused the upper snow to melt a little at noon-day, while it froze again, firmer and firmer, each night. The crust soon bore, and it was found that the sledges furnished even better means of transportation than the wheels.

There was a little controversy about the use of the skins, Daggett continuing to regard them as cargo. Necessity and numbers prevailed in the end, and the whole building was lined with them, four or five deep, by placing them inside of beckets made of the smaller rigging. By stuffing these skins compactly, within ropes so placed as to keep all snug, a very material defense against the entrance of cold was interposed. But this was not all. Inside of the skins Stimson got up hangings of canvas, using the sails of the wreck for that purpose. It was not necessary to cut these sails—Daggett would not have suffered it—but they were suspended, and cramped into openings, and otherwise so arranged as completely to conceal and shelter every side, as well as the ceilings of both rooms. Portions were fitted with such address as to fall before the windows, to which they formed very warm if not very ornamental curtains. Stephen, however, induced Roswell to order outside shutters to be made and hung; maintaining that one such shutter would soon count as a dozen cords of wood.

Much of the wood, too, was brought over from the wreck; and that which had been carelessly abandoned on the rocks was all collected and piled carefully and conveniently near the outer door of the hut; which door, by the way, looked inward, or toward the rocks in the rear of the building, where it opened on a sort of yard, that Roswell hoped to be able to keep clear of ice and snow throughout the winter. He might as well have expected to melt the glaciers of Grindewald by lighting a fire on the meadows at their base!

Stephen had another project to protect the house, and to give facilities for moving outside, when the winter should be at the hardest. In his experience at Orange Harbor, he had found that great inconvenience was sustained in consequence of the snow's melting around the building he inhabited, which came from the warmth of the fire within. To avoid this, a very serious evil, he had spare sails of heavy canvas laid across the roof of the warehouse, a building of no great height, and secured them to the rocks below by means of anchors, kedges, and various other devices; in some instances, by lashings to projections in the cliffs. Spare spars, leaning from the roof, supported this tent-like covering, and props beneath sustained the spars. This arrangement was made on only two sides of the building—one end, and the side which looked to the north; materials failing before the whole place was surrounded. The necessity for admitting light, too, admonished the sealers of the inexpediency of thus shrouding all their windows. The bottom of this tent was only ten feet from the side of the house, which gave it greater security than if it had been more horizontal, while it made a species of veranda in which exercise could be taken with greater freedom than in the rooms. Everything was done to strengthen the building in all its parts that the ingenuity of seamen could suggest; and particularly to prevent the tent-verandah from caving in.

Stephen intimated that their situation possessed one great advantage, as well as disadvantage. Inconsequence of standing on a shelf with a lower terrace so close as to be within the cast of a shovel, the snow might be thrown below and the hut relieved. The melted snow, too, would be apt to take the same direction, under the law that governs the course of all fluids. The disadvantage was in the barrier of rock behind the hut, which, while it served admirably to break the piercing south winds, would very naturally tend to make high snow-banks in drifting storms.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"My foot on the iceberg has lighted,
When hoarse the wild winds veer about,
My eye, when the bark is benighted,
Sees the lamp of the lighthouse go out.
I'm the sea-bird, sea-bird, sea-bird,
Lone looker on despair;
The sea-bird, sea-bird, sea-bird,
The only witness there."—BRAINARD.

Two months passed rapidly away in the excitement and novelty of the situation and pursuits of the men. In that time, all was done that the season would allow; the house being considered as complete, and far from uncomfortable. The days had rapidly lessened in length, and the nights increased proportionably, until the sun was visible only for a few hours at a time, and then merely passing low along the northern horizon. The cold increased in proportion, though the weather varied almost as much in that high latitude as it does in our own. It had ceased to thaw much, however; and the mean of the thermometer was not many degrees above zero. Notwithstanding this low range of the mercury, the men found that they were fast getting acclimated, and that they could endure a much greater intensity of cold than they had previously supposed possible. As yet, there had been nothing to surprise natives of New York and New England, there rarely occurring a winter in which weather quite as cold as any they had yet experienced in the antarctic sea does not set in, and last for some little time. Even while writing this very chapter of our legend, here in the mountains of Otsego, one of these Siberian visits has been paid to our valley. For the last three days the thermometer has ranged, at sunrise, between 17° and 22° below zero; though there is every appearance of a thaw, and we may have the mercury up to 40° above in the course of the next twenty-four hours. Men accustomed to such transitions, and such extreme cold, are not easily laid up or intimidated.

A great deal of snow fell about this particular portion of the year; more, indeed, than at a later period. This snow produced the greatest inconvenience; for

it soon became so deep as to form high banks around the house, and to fill all the customary haunts of the men. Still, there were places that were in a great measure exempt from this white mantle. The terrace immediately below the hut, which has so often been mentioned, was one of these bare spots. It was so placed as to be swept by both the east and the west winds, which generally cleared it of everything like snow, as fast as it fell; and this more effectually than could be done by a thousand brooms. The level of rock usually traveled in going to or from the wreck was another of these clear places. It was a sort of shelf, too narrow to admit of the snows banking, and too much raked by the winds that commonly accompanied snow, to suffer the last to lodge to any great depth. Snow there was, with a hard crust, as has already been mentioned; but it was not snow ten or fifteen feet deep, as occurred in many other places. There were several points, however, where banks had formed, even on this ledge, through which the men were compelled to cut their way by the use of shovels, an occupation that gave them exercise, and contributed to keep them in health if it was of no other service. It was found that the human frame could not endure one-half the toil, in that low state of the mercury, that it could bear in one a few degrees higher.

Daggett had not, by any means, abandoned his craft as much as he had permitted her to be dismantled. Every day or two he had some new expedient for getting the schooner off in the spring; though all who heard them were perfectly convinced of their impracticableness. This feeling induced him to cause his own men to keep open the communication; and scarce a day passed in which he did not visit the poor unfortunate craft. Nor was the place without an interest of a very peculiar sort. It has been said that the fragments of ice, some of which were more than a hundred feet in diameter, and all of which were eight or ten feet in thickness, had been left on their edges, inclining in a way to form caverns that extended a great distance. Now it happened that just around the wreck the cakes were so distributed as to intercept the first snows which filled the outer passages, got to be hardened, and, covered anew by fresh storms, thus interposed an effectual barrier to the admission of any more of the frozen element within the ice. The effect was to form a vast range of natural galleries amid the cakes, that were quite clear of any snow but that which had adhered to their surfaces, and which offered little or no impediment to motion —nay, which rather aided it, by rendering the walking less slippery. As the deck of the schooner had been cleared, leaving an easy access to all its entrances, cabin, hold, and forecastle, this put the Vineyard *Lion* under cover, while it admitted of all her accommodations being used. A portion of her wood had been left in her, it will be remembered, as well as her caboose. The last was got into the cabin, and Daggett, attended by two or three of his hands, would pass a good deal of his time there. One reason given for this distribution of the forces, was the greater room it allowed those who remained at the hut for motion. The deck of this vessel being quite clear, it offered a very favorable spot for exercise; better, in fact, than the terrace beneath the hut, being quite sheltered from the winds, and much warmer than it had been originally, or ever since the heavy fall of snows commenced. Daggett paced his quarter-deck hour after hour, almost deluding himself with the expectation of sailing for home as soon as the return of summer would permit him to depart.

Around the hut the snow early made vast embankments. Every one accustomed to the action of this particular condition of one of the great elements, will understand that a bend in the rocks outward, or a curve inward, must necessarily affect the manner in which these banks were formed. The wind did not, by any means, blow from any one point of the compass; though the southwestern cliffs might be almost termed the weather-side of the island, so much more frequently did the gales come from that quarter than from any other. The cape where the

cove lay, and where the house had been set up, being at the northeastern point, and much protected by the high tableland in its rear, it occupied the warmest situation in the whole region. The winds that swept most of the north shore, but which, owing to a curvature in its formation, did not often blow home to the hut, even when they whistled along the terrace only a hundred feet beneath, and more salient, were ordinarily from the southwest outside; though they got a more westerly inclination by following the land under the cliffs.

A bank of snow may be either a cause of destruction or a source of comfort. Of course, a certain degree of cold must exist wherever snow is to be found; but unless in absolute contact with the human body, it does not usually affect the system beyond a certain point. On the other hand, it often breaks the wind, and it has been known to form a covering to flocks, houses, etc., that has contributed essentially to their warmth. We incline to the opinion that if one slept in a cavern formed in the snow, provided he could keep himself dry, and did not come in absolute contact with the element, he would not find his quarters very uncomfortable, so long as he had sufficient clothing to confine the animal warmth near his person. Now our sealers enjoyed some such advantage as this; though not literally in the same degree. Their house was not covered with snow, though a vast bank was already formed quite near it, and a good deal had begun to pile against the tent. Singular as it may seem, on the east end of the building, and on the south front, which looked in toward the cliff next the cove, there was scarcely any snow at all. This was in part owing to the constant use of the shovel and broom, but more so to the currents of air, which usually carried everything of so light a nature as a flake to more quiet spots, before it was suffered to settle on the ground.

Roswell early found, what his experience as an American might have taught him, that the *melting* of the snow, in consequence of the warmth of the fires, caused much more inconvenience than the snow itself. The latter, when dry, was easily got along with; but, when melted in the day, and converted into icicles at night, it became a most unpleasant and not altogether a safe neighbor; inasmuch as there was really danger from the sort of damp atmosphere it produced.

The greatest ground of Roswell Gardiner's apprehensions, however, was for the supply of fuel. Much of that brought from home had been fairly used in the caboose, and in the stove originally set up in the hut. Large as that stock had been, a very sensible inroad had been made upon it; and, according to a calculation he had made, the wood regularly laid in would not hold out much more than half the time that it would be indispensable to remain on the island. This was a grave circumstance, and one that demanded very serious consideration. Without fuel it would be impossible to survive; no hardening process being sufficient to fortify the human frame to a degree that would resist the influence of an antarctic winter.

From the moment it was probable the party would be obliged to pass the winter at Sealer's Land, therefore, Roswell had kept a vigilant eye on the wood. Stimson had more than once spoken to him on the subject, and with great prudence.

"Warmth must be kept among us," said the old boat-steerer, "or there will be no hope for the stoutest man in either crew. We've a pretty good stock of coffee, and that is better, any day, than all the rum and whiskey that was ever distilled. Good hot coffee of a morning will put life into us the coldest day that ever come out of either pole; and they do say the south is colder than the north, though I never could understand why it should be so."

"You surely understand the reason why it grows warmer as we approach the equator, and colder as we go from it, whether we go north or south?"

Stimson assented; though had the truth been said, he would have been obliged to confess that he knew no more than the facts.

"All sailors know sich things, Captain

Gar'ner; though they know it with very different degrees of exper'ence. But few get as far south as I have been to pass a winter. A good pot of hot coffee of a morning will go as far as a second pea-jacket, if a man has to go out into the open air when the weather is at the hardest."

"Luckily, our small stores are quite abundant, and we are better off for coffee and sugar than for anything else. I laid in of both liberally when we were at Rio."

"Yes, Rio is a good place for the articles. But coffee must be *hot* to do a fellow much good in one of these high-latitude winters; and to be hot there must be fuel to heat it."

"I am afraid the wood will not hold out much more than half the time we shall be here. Fortunately, we had a large supply; but the other schooner was by no means as well furnished with fuel as she ought to have been for such a voyage."

"Well, sir, I suppose you know what must be done next in such a case. Without *warm* food, men can no more live through one of these winters, than they can live without food at all. If the Vineyard craft has no proper fuel aboard her, we must make fuel of her."

Roswell regarded Stephen with fixed attention for some time. The idea was presented to his mind for the second time, and he greatly liked it.

"That might do," he said; "though it will not be an easy matter to make Captain Daggett consent to such a thing."

"Let him go two or three mornings without his warm meal and hot coffee," answered Stimson, shaking his head, "and he will be glad enough to come into the scheme. A man soon gets willing to set fire to anything that will burn in such a climate. A notion has been floating about in my mind, Captain Gar'ner, that I've several times thought I would mention to you. D'ye think, sir, any benefit could be made of that volcano over the bay, should the worst get to the worst with us?"

"I have thought of the same thing, Stephen; though I fear in vain. I suppose no useful heat can be given out there, until one gets too near the bad air to breathe it. What you say about breaking up the other schooner, however, is worthy of consideration; and I will speak to Captain Daggett about it."

Roswell was as good as his word, and the Vineyard mariner met the proposal as one repels an injury. Never were our two masters so near a serious misunderstanding, as when Roswell suggested to Daggett the expediency of breaking up the wreck, now that the weather was endurable, and the men could work with reasonable comfort and tolerable advantage.

"The man who puts an ax or a saw into that unfortunate craft," said Daggett, firmly, "I shall regard as an enemy. It is a hard enough bed that she lies on, without having her ribs and sides torn to pieces by hands."

This was the strange spirit in which Daggett continued to look at the condition of the wreck. It was true that the ice prevented his actually seeing the impossibility of his ever getting his schooner into water again; but no man at all acquainted with mechanics, and who knew the paucity of means that existed on the island, could for a moment entertain the idle expectation that seemed to have got into the Vineyard-master's mind, unless subject to a species of one-idea infatuation. This infatuation, however, existed not only in Daggett's mind, but in some degree in those of his men. It is said that "in a multitude of counselors there is wisdom;" and the axiom comes from an authority too venerable to be disputed. But it might almost with equal justice be said that "in a multitude of counselors there is folly;" for men are quite as apt to sustain each other in the wrong as in the right. The individual who would hesitate about advancing his fallacies and mistakes with a single voice, does not scruple to proclaim them on the hilltops, when he finds other tongues to repeat his errors. Divine wisdom, foreseeing this consequence of human weakness, has provided a church-catholic, and proceeding directly from its Great Head on earth, as the repository of those principles, facts, and laws, that it has

deemed essential to the furtherance of its own scheme of moral government on earth; and yet we see audacious imitators starting up on every side, presuming in their ignorance, longing in their ambition, and envious in these longings, who do not scruple to shout out upon the housetops crudities over which knowledge wonders as it smiles, and humility weeps as it wonders. Such is man, when sustained by his fellows, in every interest of life; from religion, the highest of all, down to the most insignificant of his temporal concerns.

In this spirit did Daggett and his crew now feel and act. Roswell had early seen, with regret, that something like a feeling of party was getting up among the Vineyarders, who had all along regarded the better fortune of their neighbors with an ill-concealed jealousy. Ever since the shipwreck, however, this rivalry had taken a new and even less pleasant aspect. It was slightly hostile, and remarks had been occasionally made that sounded equivocally; as if the Vineyarders had an intention of separating from the other crew, and of living by themselves. It is probable, however, that all this was the fruit of disappointment; and that, at the bottom, nothing very serious was in contemplation. Daggett had permitted his people to aid in transporting most of the stores to the house; though a considerable supply had been left in the wreck. This last arrangement was made seemingly without any hostile design, but rather in furtherance of a plan to pass as much time as circumstances would allow on board the stranded vessel. There was, in truth, a certain convenience in this scheme that commended it to the good sense of all. So long as any portion of the Vineyarders could be made comfortable in the wreck it was best they should remain there; for it saved the labor of transporting all the provisions, and made more room to circulate in and about the house. The necessity of putting so many casks, barrels, and boxes within doors, had materially circumscribed the limits; and space was a great desideratum for several reasons, health in particular.

Roswell was glad, therefore, when any of the Vineyarders expressed a wish to go to the wreck and to pass a few days there. With a view to encourage this disposition, as well as to ascertain how those fared who chose that abode, he paid Daggett a visit, and passed a night or two himself in the cabin of the craft. This experiment told him that it was very possible to exist there when the thermometer stood at zero; but how it would do when ranging a great deal lower he had his doubts. The cabin was small, and a very moderate fire in the caboose served to keep it reasonably warm; though Daggett, at all times a reasonable and reasoning man, when the "root of all evil" did not sorely beset him, came fully into his own views as to the necessity of husbanding the fuel and of hardening the men. None of that close stewing over stoves, which is so common in America, and which causes one half of the winter diseases of the climate, was tolerated in either gang. Daggett saw the prudence of Roswell's, or rather of Stimson's system, and fell into it freely and with hearty good-will. It was during Gardiner's visit to the wreck that our two masters talked over their plans for the winter, while taking their exercise on the schooner's deck, each well muffled up to prevent the frost from taking hold of the more exposed parts. Every one had a seal-skin cap, made in a way to protect the ears and most of the face; and our two masters were thus provided, in common with their men.

"I suppose that we are to consider this as pleasant winter weather," Roswell remarked, "the thermometer being down only at zero. Stimson tells me that even at Orange Harbor, the season he was there, they paid out mercury until it all got into the ball. A month or two hence we may look out for the season of frosts, as the Injuns call it. You will hardly think of staying out here when the really hard weather sets in."

"I do not believe we shall feel the cold much more than we do now. This daily washing is a capital stove; for I find all hands say that, when it is once over, they feel like new men. As for me, I shall

stick by my craft while there is a timber left in her to float!"

Roswell thought how absurd it was to cling thus to a useless mass of wood, and iron, and copper; but he said nothing on that subject.

"I am now sorry that we took over to the house so many of our supplies," Daggett continued, after a short pause. "I am afraid that many of them will have to be brought back again."

"That would hardly quit cost, Daggett; it would be better to come over and pass the heel of the winter with us, when the supplies get to be short here. As we eat, we make room in the hut, you know; and you will be so much the more comfortable. An empty pork-barrel was broken up for the caboose yesterday morning."

"We shall see—we shall see, Gar'ner. My men have got a notion that your people intend to break up this schooner for fuel, should they not keep an anchor-watch aboard her."

"Anchor-watch!" repeated Roswell, smiling. "It is well named—if there ever was an anchor-watch, you keep it here; for no ground tackle will ever hold like this."

"We still think the schooner may be got off," Daggett said, regarding his companion inquiringly.

While the Vineyard-man had a certain distrust of his brother-master, he had also a high respect for his fair-dealing propensities, and a strong disposition to put confidence in his good faith. The look that he now gave was, if possible, to read the real opinion of the other, in a countenance that seldom deceived.

"I shall be grateful to God, Captain Daggett, returned Roswell, after a short pause, "if we get through the long winter of this latitude, without burning too much of *both* craft, than will be for our good. Surely it were better to begin on that which is in the least serviceable condition?"

"I have thought this matter over, Gar'ner, with all my mind—have dreamt of it—slept on it—had it before me at all hours and in all weathers; and, look at it as I will, it is full of difficulties. Will you agree to take in a half cargo of my skins and iles next season, and make in all respects a joint v'y'ge of it, from home, home ag'in, if we'll consent to let this craft be burned?"

"It exceeds my power to make any such bargain. I have an owner who looks sharply after his property, and my crew are upon lays, like the people of all sealers. You ask too much; and you forget that, should I assume the same power over my own craft, as you still claim in this wreck, you might never find the means of getting away from the group at all. We are not obliged to receive you on board our schooner."

"I know you think, Gar'ner, that it will be impossible for us ever to get our craft off; but you overlook one thing that we may do—what is there to prevent our breaking her up, and of using the materials to make a smaller vessel; one of sixty tons say—in which we might get home, besides taking most of our skins?"

"I will not say *that* will be impossible; but I do say it will be very difficult. It would be wiser for you, in my judgment, to leave your cargo in the house, under the keeping of a few hands if you see fit, and go off with me. I will land you at Rio, where you can almost always find some small American craft to come south in and pick up your leavings. If you choose that the men left behind should amuse themselves in your absence by building a small craft, I am certain they will meet with no opposition from me. There is but one place where a vessel can be launched, and that is the spot in the cove where we beached your schooner. There it might possibly be done, though I think not without a great deal of trouble, and possibly not without more means than are to be picked up along shore in this group. But there is a very important fact that you overlook, Daggett, which it may be as well to mention here as to delay it. *Your* craft, or *mine*, must be used as fuel this winter, or we shall freeze to death to a man. I have made the calculations closely; and, certain as our existence, there is no alternative between such

a death and the use of the fuel I have mentioned."

"Not a timber of mine shall be touched. I do not believe one-half of these stories about the antarctic winter, which cannot be much worse than what a body meets with up in the Bay of Fundy."

"A winter in the Bay of Fundy without fuel must be bad enough; but it is a mere circumstance to one here. I should think that a man who has tasted an antarctic *summer* and *autumn* must get a pretty lively notion of what is to come after them."

"The men can keep in their berths much of the time, and save wood. There are many other ways of getting through a winter than burning a vessel. I shall never consent to a stick of this good craft's going into the galley-fire as long as I can see my way clear to prevent it. I would burn *cargo* before I would burn my *craft*."

Roswell wondered at this pertinacity; but he trusted to the pressure of the coming season, and changed the subject. Certainly the thought of breaking up his own craft did not cross his mind; though he could see no sufficient objection to the other side of the proposition. As discussion was useless, however, he continued to converse with Daggett on various practical subjects, on which his companion was rational and disposed to learn.

It had been ascertained by experiment that the water, at a considerable depth, was essentially warmer beneath the ice than at its surface. A plan had been devised by which the lower currents of the water could be pumped up for the purposes of the bath; thus rendering the process far more tolerable than it had previously been. Bathing in extremely cold weather, however, is not so formidable a thing as is generally supposed, the air being at a lower temperature than the water. As the greatest importance was attached to these daily ablutions, the subject was gone over between the two masters in all its bearings. There were no conveniences for the operation at the wreck; and this was one reason why Roswell suggested that a residence there ought to be abandoned. Daggett dissented, and invited his companion to take a walk in his caverns.

A promenade in a succession of caves formed of ice, with the thermometer at zero, would naturally strike one as a somewhat chilling amusement. Gardiner did not find it so. He was quite protected from the wind, which gives so much pungency to bitter cold, rendering it insupportable. Completely protected from this, and warmed by the exertion of clambering among the cakes, Roswell's blood was soon in a healthful glow; and, to own the truth, when he left the wreck, it was with a much better opinion of it, as a place of residence, than when he had arrived to pay his visit.

As there was now nothing for the men to do in the way of preparation, modes of amusement were devised that might unite activity of body with that of the mind. The snows ceased to fall as the season advanced, and there were but few places on which heavy burdens might not have been transported over their crusts. It was, indeed, easier moving about on the surface of the frozen snow than it had been on the naked rocks; the latter offering obstacles that no longer showed themselves. Sliding down the declivities, and even skating, were practiced; few northern Americans being ignorant of the latter art. Various other sources of amusement were resorted to; but it was found, generally, that very little exercise in the open air exhausted the frame, and that a great difficulty of breathing occurred. Still, it was thought necessary to health that the men should remain as much as possible out of the crowded house; and various projects were adopted to keep up the vital warmth while exposed. Ere the month of July had passed, which corresponds to our January, it had been found expedient to make dresses of skins, for which fortunately the materials abounded.

As the season advanced the idea of preserving more than the lives of his men was gradually abandoned by Gardiner, though Daggett still clung to his wreck, and actually had wood transported back

to it, that he might stay as much as possible near his property. There was no longer any thawing, though there were very material gradations in the intensity of the frosts. Occasionally it was quite possible to remain in the open air an hour or two at a time; then again there were days in which it exceeded the powers of human endurance to remain more than a few minutes removed to any distance from heat artificially procured. On the whole, however, it was found that the comparatively moderate weather predominated, and it was rare, indeed, that all the people did not pursue their avocations and amusements outside, at what was called the middle of the day.

And what a meridian it was! The shortest day had passed some time, when Roswell and Stimson were walking together on the terrace, then, as usual, as clear from snow as if swept by a broom, but otherwise wearing the aspect of interminable winter, in common with all around it. They were conversing as had been much their wont of late, and were watching the passage of the sun as he stole along the northern horizon, even at high nooon rising but a very few degrees above it!

"It has a cold look, sir, but it does give out some heat," said Stephen, as he faced the luminary in one of his turns. "I can feel a little warmth from it just now, sheltered as we are here under the cliffs, and with a background of naked rock to throw back what reaches us. To me all these changes in the movements of the sun seem very strange, Captain Gar'ner; but I know I am ignorant, and that others may well know all about what I do not understand."

Here Gardiner undertook to explain the phenomena that have been slightly treated on in our own pages. There are few Americans so ignorant as not to be fully aware that the sun has no sensible motion, or any motion that has an apparent influence on our own planet; but fewer still clearly comprehend the reasons of those very changes that are occurring constantly before their eyes. We cannot say that Captain Gardiner succeeded very well in his undertaking, though he imprinted on the old boat-steerer's mind the fact that the sun would not be seen at all were they only a few degrees further south than they actually were.

"And now, sir, I suppose he'll get higher and higher every day," put in Stephen, "until he comes quite up above our heads?"

"Not exactly that at noon; though abeam, as it might be, mornings and evenings."

"Still the coldest of our weather is yet to come, or I have no exper'ence in such things. Why does not the heat come back with the sun—or what seems to be the sun coming back? though, as you tell me, Captain Gar'ner, it's only the 'arth sheering this-a-away and that-a-away in her course."

"One may well ask such a question—but cold produces cold, and it takes time to wear it out. February is commonly the coldest month in the year, even in America; though days occur in other months that may be colder than any one in February. March, and even April, are months I dread here; and that so much the more, Stephen, because our fuel goes a good deal faster than I could wish."

"What you say is very true, sir. Still the people must have fire. I turned out this morning, while all hands were still in their berths, and looked to the stove, and it was as much as human natur' could bear to be about without my cap and skin-covering, though indoors the whole time. If the weather goes on as it has begun, we shall have to keep a watch at the stove; nor do I think one stove will answer us much longer. We shall want another in the sleeping-room."

"Heaven knows where the wood is to come from! Unless Captain Daggett gives up the wreck, we shall certainly be out long before the mild season returns."

"We must keep ourselves warm, sir, by reading the Bible," answered Stimson, smiling; though the glance he cast at his officer was earnest and anxious. "You must not forget, Captain Gar'ner, that you've promised one who is praying for you daily to go through the chapters she

has marked, and give the matter a patient and attentive thought. No sealin', sir, can be half so important as this reading of the good book in the right spirit."

"So you believe that Jesus was the Son of God!" exclaimed Roswell, half inquiringly, and half in a modified sort of levity.

"As much as I believe that we are here, sir. I wish I was half as certain of ever getting away."

"What has caused you to believe this, Stimson?—reason, or the talk of your mother and of the parson?"

"My mother died afore I could listen to her talk, sir; and very little have I had to do with parsons, for the want of being where they are to be found. *Faith* tells me to believe this; and Faith comes from God."

"And I could believe it, too, were Faith imparted to me from the same source. As it is, I fear I shall never believe in what appears to me to be an impossibility."

Then followed a long discussion, in which ingenuity, considerable command of language, human pride, and worldly sentiments, contended with that clear, intuitive, deep conviction which it is the pleasure of the Deity often to bestow on those who would otherwise seem to be unfitted to become the respositories of so great a gift. As we shall have to deal with this part of our subject more particularly hereafter, we shall not enlarge on it here; but pursue the narrative as it is connected with the advance of the season, and the influence the latter exerted over the whole party of the lost sealers.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Beyond the Jewish ruler, banded close,
A company full glorious, I saw
The twelve Apostles stand. Oh, with what looks
Of ravishment and joy, what rapturous tears,
What hearts of ecstasy, they gazed again
On their beloved Master."

—HILLHOUSE'S JUDGMENT.

IT has become necessary to advance the season to the beginning of the month of October, which corresponds to our own April. In a temperate climate this would mark the opening of spring; and the reviving hopes of a new and genial season would find a place in every bosom. Not so at Sealer's Land. So long as the winter was its height, and the clear, steady cold continued, by falling into a system so prepared as to meet the wants of such a region, matters had gone on regularly, if not with comfort; and, as yet, the personal disasters were confined to a few frozen cheeks and noses, the results of carelessness and wanton exposure, rather than of absolute necessity. But one who had seen the place in July, and who examined it now, would find many marks of change, not to say of deterioration.

In the first place, a vast deal of snow had fallen; fallen, indeed, to such a degree as even to cover the terrace, block up the path that communicated with the wreck, and nearly to smother the house and all around it. The winds were high and piercing, rendering the cold doubly penetrating. The thermometer now varied essentially, sometimes rising considerably above zero, though oftener falling far below it. There had been many storms in September, and October was opening with a most blustering and wintry aspect. In one sense, however, the character of the season had changed: the dry, equal cold, that was generally supportable, having been succeeded by tempests that were sometimes a little moist, but oftener of intense frigidity. Of course the equinox was past, and there were more than twelve hours of sun. The great luminary showed himself well above the northern horizon; and though the circuit described an arc that did not promise soon to bring him near the zenith at meridian, it was a circuit that seemed about to inclose Sealer's Land, by carrying the orb of day so far south, morning and evening, as to give it an air of traveling round the spot.

These changes had not occurred without suffering and danger. Enormous icicles were suspended from the roof of the house, reaching to the ground, the third and fourth successions of these signs of heat and cold united, the earlier forma-

tions having been knocked down and thrown away. Mountains of drifted snow were to be seen in places, all along the shore; and wreaths that threatened fearful avalanches were suspended from the cliffs, waiting only for the increase of the warmth, to come down upon the rocks beneath. Once already had one of these masses fallen on the wreck; and the Oyster Pond men had been busy for a week digging into the pile, in order to go to the rescue of the Vineyarders. There was much generosity and charitable feeling displayed in this act; for, owing to the obstinate adherence of Daggett and his people to what they deemed their rights, Roswell had finally been compelled to cut to pieces the upper works of his own schooner to obtain fuel that might prevent his own party from freezing to death. The position of the *Sea Lion* of Oyster Pond was to be traced only by a high mound of snow, which had been arrested by the obstacle she presented to its drift; but her bulwarks, planks, deck, top-timbers, stern-frame—in short, nearly all of the vessel above water, had actually been taken to pieces, and carried within the covering of the veranda mentioned, in readiness for the stoves!

To render the obstinacy of the other crew more apparent, Daggett had been obliged to do the same! Much of his beloved craft had already disappeared in the caboose, and more was likely to follow. This compelled destruction, however, rather increased than lessened his pertinacity. He clung to the last chip; and no terms of compromise would he now listen to at all. The stranded wreck was his, and his people's; while the other wreck belonged to the men from Oyster Pond. Let each party act for itself, and take care of its own. Such were his expressed opinions, and on them he acted.

This state of things had not been brought about in a day. Months had passed; Roswell had seen his last billet of wood put in the caboose; had tried various experiments for producing heat by means of oil, which so far succeeded as to enable the ordinary boiling to be done, thereby saving wood; but, when a cold turn set in, it was quickly found that the schooner must go, or all hands perish. When this decree went forth, every one understood that the final preservation of the party depended on that of the boats. For one entire day the question had been up in general council, whether or not the two whale-boats should be burnt, with their oars and appurtenances, before the attack was made on the schooner itself. Stimson settled this point, as he did so many others, Roswell listening to all he said with a constantly increasing attention.

"If we burn the boats first," said the boat-steerer, "and then have to come to the schooner a'ter all, how are we ever to get away from this group? Them boats wouldn't last us a week, even in our best weather; but they may answer to take us to some Christian land, when every rib and splinter of the *Sea Lion* is turned into ashes. I would begin on the upper works of the schooner first, Captain Gar'ner, resarvin' the spars, though they would burn the freest. Then I would saw away the top-timbers, beams, decks, transoms, and everything down within a foot of the water; but I wouldn't touch anything below the copper, for this here reason: unless Captain Daggett sets to work on his craft and burns her up altogether, we may find mater'als enough in the spring to deck over ag'in the poor thing down there in the cove, and fit her out a'ter a fashion, and make much better weather of it in her than in our boats. That's my opinion, sir."

It was decided that this line of conduct should be pursued. The upper works of the schooner were all taken out of her as soon as the weather permitted, and the wood was carried up and stored in the house. Even with this supply, it was soon seen that great economy was to be used, and that there might be the necessity of getting at the vessel's bottom. As for the schooner, as the people still affectionately called the hull, or what was left of the hull, everything had been taken out of her. The frozen oil was carried up to the house in chunks, and used for fuel and lights. A good deal of heat was obtained

by making large wicks of canvas, and placing them in vessels that contained oil; though it was very far from sufficing to keep life in the men during the hardest of the weather. The utmost economy in the use of the fuel that had been so dearly obtained was still deemed all-essential to eventual preservation. Happily the season advanced all this time, and the month of October was reached. The intercourse between the crews had by no means been great during the two solemn and critical months that were just passed. A few visits had been exchanged at noon-day, and when the thermometer was a little above zero; but the snow was filling the path, and as yet there were no thaws to produce a crust on which the men might walk.

About a month previously to the precise time to which it is our intention now to advance the more regular action of the legend, Macy had come over to the house, attended by one man, with a proposal on the part of Daggett for the two crews to occupy his craft, as he still persisted in calling the wreck, and of using the house as fuel. This was previously to beginning to break up either vessel. Gardiner had thought of this plan in connection with his own schooner, a scheme that would have been much more feasible than that now proposed, on account of the difference in distance; but it had soon been abandoned. All the material of the building was of pine, and that well seasoned; a wood that burns like tinder. No doubt there would have been a tolerably comfortable fortnight or three weeks by making these sacrifices; then would have come certain destruction.

As to the proposal of Daggett, there were many objections to it. A want of room would be one; want of provisions another; and there would be the necessity of transporting stores, bedding, and a hundred things that were almost as necessary to the people as warmth; and which indeed contributed largely to their warmth. In addition was the objection just mentioned, of the insufficiency of the materials of the building; an objection which was just as applicable to a residence in one vessel as a residence in the other. Of course the proposition was declined.

Macy remained a night with the Oyster Ponders, and left the house after breakfast next morning; knowing that Daggett only waited for his return with a negative to commence breaking up the wreck. The mate was attended by the seaman, returning as he had arrived. Two days later, there having been a slight yielding of the snow under the warmth of the noonday sun, and a consequent hardening of its crust in the succeeding night, Roswell and Stimson undertook to return this visit, with a view to make a last effort to persuade Daggett to quit the wreck and come over to the house altogether. When they had got about half-way between the two places, they found the body of the seaman, stiff, frozen, hard, and dead. A quarter of a mile further on, the reckless Macy, who it was supposed greatly sustained Daggett in his obstinacy, was found in precisely the same state. Both had fallen in the path, and stiffened under the terrible power of the climate. It was not without difficulty that Roswell reached the wreck, and reported what he had seen. Even this terrible admonition did not change Daggett's purpose. He had begun to burn his vessel, for there was now no alternative; but he was doing it on a system which, as he explained it to Roswell, was not only to leave him materials with which to construct a smaller craft in the spring, but which would allow of his inhabiting the steerage and cabin as long as he pleased.

In some respects the wreck certainly had its advantages over the house. There was more room for exercise, the caverns of the ice being extensive, while they completely excluded the wind, which was now the great danger of the season. It was doubtless owing to the wind that Macy and his companion had perished. As the spring approached, these winds increased in violence; though there had been slight symptoms of their coming more blandly, even at the time when their colder currents were really frightful.

A whole month succeeded this visit of Roswell's, during which there was no in-

tercourse. It was September, the March of the antarctic circle, and the weather had been terrific during most of the period. It was during these terrible four weeks that Roswell completed his examination of the all-important subject Mary had marked out for him, and which Stimson had so earnestly and so often placed before his mind. The sudden fate of Macy and his companion, the condition of his crew, and all the serious circumstances with which he was surrounded, conspired to predispose him to inquiry; and what was equally important in such an investigation, to humility. Man is a very different being in high prosperity from what he becomes when the blows of an evil fortune, or the visitations of Divine Providence alight upon him. The scepticism of Roswell was more the result of human pride, or confidence in himself, than of any precept derived from others, or of any deep reasoning process whatever.

He conceived that the theory of the incarnation of the Son of God was opposed to philosophy and experience, it is true; and, thus far, he may be said to have reasoned in the matter, though it was in his own way, and with a very contracted view of the subject; but pride had much more to do with even this conclusion than a knowledge of physics or philosophy. It did not comport with the respect he entertained for his own powers, to lend his faith to an account that conflicted with so many of the opinions he had formed on evidence and practice. Credulous women might have their convictions on the truth of this history, but it was not necessary for men to be as easily duped. There was something even amiable and attractive in this weakness of the other sex, that would ill comport, however, with the greater sternness of masculine judgment. Roswell, as he once told Stimson, hesitated to believe in anything that he could not comprehend. His God must be worshiped for the obvious truth of his attributes and existence. He wished to speak with respect of things that so many worthy people reverenced; but he could not forget that Providence had made him a reasoning creature; and his reason must be convinced. Stephen was no great logician, as the reader will easily understand; but Newton possessed no clearer demonstration of any of his problems than this simple, nay ignorant, man enjoyed in his religious faith, through the divine illumination it had received in the visit of the Holy Spirit.

That gloomy month, however, had not been thrown away. All the men were disposed to be serious; and the reading of the Bible, openly and aloud, soon became a favorite occupation with every one of them. Although Roswell's reading was directed by the marks of Mary, all of which had reference to those pages that touched on the divinity of the Saviour, he made no comments that betrayed his incredulity. There is a simple earnestness in the narrative portions of the Gospel that commends its truth to every mind, and it had its effect on that of Roswell Gardiner; though it failed to remove doubts that had so long been cherished, and which had their existence in pride of reason, or what passes for such, with those who merely skim the surface of things, as they seem to exist around them.

On the evening of that particular day in October, to which we desire now to advance the time, and after the most pleasant and cheerful afternoon and sunset that any on the island had seen for many months, Roswell and Stimson ventured to continue their exercise on the terrace, then again clear of impediments, even after the day had closed. The night promised to be cold, but the weather was not yet so keen as to drive them to a shelter. Both fancied there was a feeling of spring in the wind, which was from the northeast, a quarter that brought the blandest currents of air into those seas, if any air of that region deserved such a term at all.

"It is high time we had some communications with the Vineyarders," said Roswell, as they turned at the end of the terrace which was nearest to the wreck. "A full month has passed since we have seen any of them, or have heard a syllable of their doings or welfare."

"It's a bad business this separation, Captain Gar'ner," returned the boat-steerer; "and every hour makes it worse. Think how much good might have been done them young men had they only been with us while we've been reading the book of books, night and morning, sir!"

"That good book seems to fill most of your thoughts, Stephen; I wish I could have your faith."

"It will come in time, sir, if you will only strive for it. I'm sure no heart could have been harder than mine was, until within the last five years. I was far worse as a Christian, Captain Gar'ner, than I consider you to be; for while you have doubts consarning the divinity of our Blessed Lord, I had no thought of any one of the Trinity. My only God was the world; and sich a world, too, as a poor sailor knows. It was being but little better than the brutes."

"Of all the men with me, you seem to be the most contented and happy. I cannot say I have seen even a sign of fear about you, when things have been at the worst."

"It would be very ungrateful, sir, to mistrust a Providence that has done so much for me."

"I devoutly wish I could believe with you that Jesus was the Son of God!"

"Excuse me, Captain Gar'ner; it's jist because you do not *devoutly* wish this that you do not believe. I think I understand the natur' of your feelin's, sir. I had some sich once, myself; though it was only in a small way. I was too ignorant to feel much pride in my own judgment, and soon gave up every notion that went ag'in Scriptur'. I own it is not accordin' to natur', as we know natur', to believe in this doctrine; but we know too little of a thousand things to set up our weak judgments in the very face of revelation."

"I am quite willing to believe all I can understand, Stephen; but I find it difficult to credit accounts that are irreconcilable with all that my experience has taught me to be true."

"They who are of your way of thinkin', sir, do not deny that Christ was a good man and a prophet; and that the apostles were good men and prophets; and that they all worked miracles."

"This much I am willing enough to believe; but the other doctrine seems contrary to what is possible."

"Yet you have seen, sir, that these apostles believed what you refuse. One thing has crossed my mind, Captain Gar'ner, which I wish to say to you. I know I'm but an ignorant man, and my idees may be hardly worth your notice; but sich as they be, I want to lay 'em afore you. We are told that these apostles were all men from a humble class in life, with little l'arnin', chosen, as it might be, to show men that faith stood in need of no riches, or edication, or worldly greatness of any sort. To me, sir, there is a wholesome idee in that one thing."

"It gives us all a useful lesson, Stephen, and has often been mentioned, I believe, in connection with the doctrines of Christianity."

"Yes, sir—so I should think; though I don't remember ever to have heard it named from any pulpit. Well, Captain Gar'ner, it does not agree with our notions to suppose that God Himself, a part of the Ruler and Master of the Universe, should be born of a woman, and come among sinners in order to save 'em from His own just judgments."

"That is just the difficulty that I have in believing what are called the dogmas of Christianity on that one point. To me it has ever seemed the most improbable thing in the world."

"Just so, sir—I had some sort of feelin' of that natur' myself once. When God, in his goodness, put it into my heart to believe, however, as he was pleased to do in a fit of sickness from which I never expected to rise, and in which I was led to pray to Him for assistance, I began to think over all these matters in my own foolish manner. Among other things, I said to myself, 'Is it likely that any mortal man would dream of calling Christ the Son of God, unless it was put into *his* mind to say so?' Then comes the characters of them men, who all admit were upright and religious. How can we sup-

pose that they would agree in giving the same account of sich a thing unless what they said had been told to them by some tongue that they believed?"

Roswell smiled at Stephen's reasoning, which was not without a certain point, but which an ingenious man might find the means of answering in various ways.

"There is another thing, sir, that I've read in a book," resumed the boat-steerer, "which goes a great way with me. Jesus allowed others to call him the Son of God, without rebuking them for doing so. It does really seem that they who believe He was a good man, as I understand is the case with you, Captain Gar'ner, must consider this a strong fact. We are to remember what a sin idolatry is; how much all raal worshipers abhor it; and then set that feelin' side by side with the fact that the Son did not think it robbery to be called the equal of the Father. To me that looks like a proof that our belief has a solid foundation."

Roswell did not reply. He was aware that it would not be just to hold any creed responsible for the manner in which a person like Stimson defended it. Still, he was struck with both of this man's facts. The last he had often met in books; but the first was new to him. Of the two, this novel idea of the improbability of the apostles inventing that which would seem to be opposed to all men's notions and prejudices, struck him more forcibly than the argument adduced from the acquiescence of the Redeemer in His own divinity. The last might be subject to verbal criticism, and could possibly be explained away, as he imagined; but the first appeared to be intimately incorporated with the entire history of Christ's ministrations on earth. These were the declarations of John the Baptist, the simple and unpretending histories of the Gospels, the commentaries of St. Paul, and the venerable teachings of the Church through so many centuries of varying degrees of faith and contention, each and all going to corroborate a doctrine that, in his eyes, appeared to be so repugnant to philosophy and reason. Wishing to be alone, Roswell gave an order to Stimson to execute some duty that fell to his share, and continued walking up and down the terrace alone for quite an hour longer.

The night was coming in cold and still. It was one of those last efforts of winter in which all the terrible force of the season was concentrated; and it really appeared as if Nature, wearied with its struggle to return to a more genial temperature, yielded in despair, and was literally returning backward through the coldest of her months. The moon was young, but the stars gave forth a brightness that is rarely seen, except in the clear cold nights of a high latitude. Each and all of these sublime emblems of the power of God were twinkling like bright torches glowing in space; and the mind had only to endow each with its probable or known dimensions, its conjectural and reasonable uses, to form a picture of the truest sublimity in which man is made to occupy his real position. In this world, where, in a certain sense, he is master; where all things are apparently under his influence, if not absolutely subject to his control; where little that is distinctly visible is to be met with that does not seem to be created to meet his wants, or to be wholly at his disposal, one gets a mistaken and frequently a fatal notion of his true place in the scale of the beings who are intended to throng around the footstool of the Almighty. As the animalculæ of the atmospheric air bear a proportion to things visible, so would this throng seem to bear a proportion to our vague estimates of the spiritual hosts. All this Roswell was very capable of feeling, and in some measure of appreciating; and never before had he been made so conscious of his own insignificance, as he became while looking on the firmament that night, glowing with its bright worlds and suns, doubtless the centers of other systems in which distance swallowed up the lesser orbs.

Almost every one has heard or read of that collection of stars which goes by the name of the Southern Cross. The resemblance to the tree on which Christ suffered is not particularly striking, though all who navigate the southern hemisphere

know it, and recognize it by its imputed appellation. It now attracted Roswell's gaze; and coming as it did after so much reading, so many conversations with Stephen, and addressing itself to one whose heart was softened by the fearful circumstances that had so long environed the sealers, it is not surprising that it brought our young master to meditate seriously on his true condition in connection with the atonement that he was willing to admit had been made for him, in common with all of earth, at the very moment he hesitated to believe that the sufferer was, in any other than a metaphorical sense, the Son of God.

It is not our intention to describe more of the religious feelings of Mary and her suitor, or to enter farther into any disquisition on subjects of this nature, than may be absolutely necessary to elucidate the facts of our history. In order to do the last distinctly, however, we shall endeavor to make a very brief analysis of the process of reasoning, and we may add of feeling too, that was at work in Roswell Gardiner's mind and heart, as he paced the terrace that night, after Stimson had left him.

We suppose that a sense of humility is the first healthful symptom that shows itself in every man's moral regeneration. A meek appreciation of his own station and character disposes him to receive revelation with respect, and to have faith in things that are not seen. Perhaps no one over whom the sword of fate was not actually suspened by a hair, was ever better placed to admit the lessons of humility than was Roswell Gardiner at that very moment. Modest he always was, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, and this without professions or grimaces; but he had a high idea of the human understanding, and revolted at believing that which did violence to all his experience and preconceived opinions. This was the weak spot in his character, which time, with an increasing knowledge of men and things, or some merciful teaching of Divine Providence, could alone remove.

Roswell certainly did not converse with Stimson in the expectation of being much instructed; but the humble and uneducated boat-steerer had been at a school that raises the dullest intellect far above all the inferences of philosophy. He had faith, without which no man is truly wise; no man learned, in the highest interest of his being. Under the guidance of this leader, Stephen occasionally threw out an idea that struck the mind of his officer by its simplicity and force, and helped to complete that change for which circumstances, reading and reflection had now been many months preparing the way. The day preceding this walk on the terrace, Roswell observed to Stimson that he had difficulty in believing in a Deity he could not comprehend; meaning merely that his reason must be satisfied in a doctrine like that of the incarnation.

"Well, sir, that's not my feelin'," answered Stephen, earnestly. "A Deity I could understand would be no God for me. Where there is the same knowledge, there is too much companionship like, for worship and reverence."

"But we are told that man was created after the image of God."

"In his likeness, Captain Gar'ner—with *some* of the Divine Spirit, but not with all. That makes him different from the brutes, and immortal. I have convarsed with a clergyman who thinks that the angels, and archangels, and other heavenly beings, are far even before the saints in heaven, such as have been only men on 'arth."

The idea of not having a Deity that he could not comprehend, had long been one of Roswell Gardiner's favorite rules of faith. He did not understand by this pretending dogma, that he was, in any respect, of capacity equal to comprehend with that of the Divine Being, but simply that he was not to be expected or required to believe in any theory which manifestly conflicted with his knowledge and experience, as both were controlled by the powers of induction he had derived directly from his Creator. In a word, his exception was one of the most obvious of the suggestions of the pride of reason, and just so much in direct opposition to the

great law of regeneration, which has its very gist in the converse of his feeling—Faith.

As our young master paced the terrace alone, that idea of the necessity of the Creator's being incomprehensible to the created, recurred to him. The hour that succeeded was probably the most important in Roswell Gardiner's life. So intense were his feelings, so active the workings of his mind, that he was quite insensible to the intensity of the cold; and his body keeping equal in motion with his thoughts, if one may so express it, his frame actually set at defiance a temperature that might otherwise have chilled it, warmly and carefully as it was clad.

Truly there were many causes existing at that time and place to bring any man to a just sense of his real position in the scale of created beings. The vault above Roswell was sparkling with orbs floating in space, most of them far more vast than this earth, and each of them doubtless having its present or destined use. What was that light, so brilliant and pervading throughout space, that converted each of those masses of dark matter into globes clothed with a glorious brightness? Roswell had seen chemical experiments that produced wonderful illuminations; but faint, indeed, were the most glowing of those artificial torches, to the floods of light that came streaming out of the void, on missions of millions and millions of miles. Who, and what was the Dread Being—dread in his Majesty and Justice, but inexhaustible in Love and Mercy—who used these exceeding means as mere instruments of his pleasure? and what was he himself, that he should presume to set up his miserable pride of reason, in opposition to a revelation supported by miracles that must be admitted to come through men inspired by the Deity, or rejected altogether?

In this frame of mind Roswell was made to see that Christianity admitted of no half-way belief; it was all true, or it was wholly false.

And why should not Christ be the Son of God, as the Fathers of the Church had perseveringly, but so simply proclaimed, and as that Church had continued to teach for eighteen centuries? Roswell believed himself to have been created in the image of God; and his much-prized reason told him that he could perpetuate himself in successors; and that which the Creator had given *him* the power to achieve, could he not in his own person perform? For the first time, an inference to the contrary seemed to be illogical.

Then the necessity for the great expiation occurred to his mind. This had always been a stumbling-block to Roswell's faith. He could not see it; and that which he could not see he was indisposed to believe. Here was the besetting weakness of his character; a weakness which did not suffer him to perceive that could he comprehend so profound a mystery he would be raised far above that very Nature in which he took so much pride. As he reflected on this branch of the subject, a thousand mysteries, physical and moral, floated before his mind; and he became aware of the little probability that he should have been endowed with the faculties to comprehend this, the greatest of them all. Had not science gradually discovered the chemical processes by which gases could be concentrated and disengaged, the formation of one of those glittering orbs above his head would have been quite as unintelligible a mystery to him, as the incarnation of the Saviour. The fact was, that phenomena that were just as mysterious to the human mind as any that the dogmas of Christianity required to be believed, exist hourly before our eyes without awaking scepticism, or exciting discussion; finding their impunity in their familiarity. Many of these phenomena were strictly incomprehensible to human understandings, which could reason up to a fountain-head in each case; and there it was obliged to abandon the inductive process, purely for the want of power to grapple with the premises which control the whole demonstration.

Could Mary Pratt have known what was going on in Roswell Gardiner's soul that night, her happiness would have been as boundless as her gratitude to God. She

would have seen the barrier that had so long interposed itself to her wishes broken down; not by any rude hand, but by the influence of those whisperings of the Divine Spirit, which open the way to men to fit themselves for the presence of God.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Let winter come! let polar spirits sweep
The darkening world, and tempest-troubled deep!"
—CAMPBELL.

WHILE the bosom of Roswell was thus warming with the new-born faith, of which the germ was just opening in his heart, Stimson came out upon the terrace to see what had become of his officer. It was much past the hour when the men got beneath the coverings of their mattresses; and the honest boat-steerer, who had performed the duty on which he had been sent, was anxious about Roswell's remaining so long in the open air, on this positively the severest night of the whole season.

"You stand the cold well, Captain Garner," said Stephen, as he joined his officer; "but it might be prudent, now, to get under cover."

"I do not feel it cold, Stephen," returned Roswell—"on the contrary, I'm in a pleasant glow. My mind has been busy while my frame has kept in motion. When such are the facts, the body seldom suffers. But, hearken—does it not seem that some one is calling to us from the direction of the wreck?"

The great distance to which sounds are conveyed in intensely cold and clear weather is a fact known to most persons. Conversations in the ordinary tone had been heard by the sealers when the speakers were nearly a mile off; and, on several occasions, attempts had been made to hold communications, by means of the voice, between the wreck and the but. Certain words *had* been understood; but it was found impossible to hold anything that could be termed conversation. Still, the voice had been often heard, and a fancy had come over the mind of Roswell that he heard a cry like a call for assistance, just as Stimson joined him.

"It is so late, sir, that I should hardly think any of the Vineyarders would be up," observed the boat-steerer, after listening some little time in the desire to catch the sound mentioned. "Then it is so cold, that most men would like to get beneath their blankets as soon as they could."

"I do not find it so very cold, Stephen. Have you looked at the thermometer lately?"

"I gave it a look in coming out, sir; and it tells a terrible story to-night! The mercury is all down in the ball, which is like givin' the matter up, I do suppose, Captain Gar'ner."

"'Tis strange! I do not *feel* it so very cold! The wind seems to be getting round to the northeast too; give us enough of that, and we shall have a thaw. Hark! there is the cry again."

This time there could be no mistake. A human voice had certainly been raised amid the stillness of that almost polar night, clearly appealing to human ears, for succor. The only word heard or comprehended was that of "help;" one well enough adapted to carry the sound far and distinctly. There was a strain of agony in the cry, as if he who made it uttered it in despair. Roswell's blood seemed to flow back to his heart; never had he before felt so appalling a sense of the dependence of man on a Divine Providence, as at that moment.

"You heard it?" he said, inquiringly, to Stephen, after an instant of silent attention, to make sure that no more was to reach his ears just then.

"Sartain, sir—no man could mistake *that*. It was the voice of the nigger, Joe; him that Captain Daggett has for a cook."

"Think you so, Stephen? The fellow has good lungs, and they may have set him to call upon us in their distress. What can be the nature of the assistance they ask?"

"I've been thinking of that, Captain Gar'ner; and a difficult p'int it is to answer. Food they must have still; and was they in want of their rations, hands

would have been sent across to get 'em. They may have let their fire go out, and be without the means to relight it. I can think of nothing else that is likely to happen to men so sarcumstanced."

The last suggestion struck Roswell as possible. From the instant he felt certain that he was called on for aid, he had determined to proceed to the wreck, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, and the intense severity of the weather. As he had intimated to Stephen, he was not at all conscious how very cold it was; exercise and the active workings of his mind having brought him to an excellent condition to resist the sternness of the season. The appeal had been so sudden and unexpected, however, that he was at first somewhat at a loss how to proceed. The matter was now discussed between him and Stimson, when the following plan was adopted:

The mates were to be called and made acquainted with what had occurred, and put on their guard as to what might possibly be required of them. It was not thought necessary to call any of the rest of the men. There was always one hand on the watch in the house, whose duty it was to look to the fires, for the double purpose of security against a conflagration, and to prevent the warmth within from sinking too near to the cold without. It had often occurred to Roswell's mind that a conflagration would prove quick destruction to his party. In the first place, most of the provisions would be lost; and it was certain that, without a covering and the means of keeping warm within it, the men could not resist the climate eight-and-forty hours. The burning of the hut would be certain death.

Roswell took no one with him but Stimson. Two were as good as a hundred, if all that was asked were merely the means to relight the fire. These means were provided, and a loaded pistol was taken also, to enable a signal-shot to be fired, should circumstances seem to require further aid. One or two modes of communicating leading facts were concerted, when our hero and his companion set forth on their momentous journey.

Taking the hour, the weather, and the object before him into the account, Roswell Gardiner felt that he was now enlisted in the most important undertaking of his whole life, as he and Stephen shook hands with the two mates, and left the point. The drifts rendered a somewhat circuitous path necessary at first; but the moon and stars shed so much of their radiance on the frozen covering of the earth that the night was quite as light as many a London day. Excitement and motion kept the blood of our two adventurers in a brisk circulation, and prevented their becoming immediately conscious of the chill intensity of the cold to which they were exposed.

"It is good to think of Almighty God, and of his many marcies," said Stephen, when a short distance from the house, "as a body goes forth on an expedition as serious as this. We may not live to reach the wrack, for it seems to me to grow colder and colder!"

"I wonder we hear no more of the cries," remarked Roswell, who was thinking of the distress he was bent on relieving. "One would think that a man who could call so stoutly would give us another cry."

"A body can never calculate on a nigger," answered Stephen, who had the popular American prejudice against the caste that had so long been held in servitude in the land. "They call out easily, and shut up uncommon quick, if there's nothin' gained by yelling. Black blood won't stand cold like white blood, Captain Gar'ner, any more than white blood will stand heat like black blood."

"I have heard this before, Stephen; and it has surprised me that Captain Daggett's cook should be the only one of that party who seems to have had any voice to-night."

Stimson had a good deal to say now as the two picked their way across the field of snow, always walking on the crust, which in most places would have upheld a loaded vehicle; the subject of his remarks being the difference between the two races as respects their ability to endure hardships. The worthy boat-steerer had several tales to relate of cases in

"There must be life in him yet, sir, nigger as he his. It's not yet twenty minutes since he gave that last cry."—*The Sea Lions.*

which he had known negroes freeze when whites have escaped. As the fact is one pretty well established, Roswell listened complacently enough, being much too earnest in pressing forward toward his object to debate any of his companion's theories just then. It was while thus employed that Roswell fancied he heard one more cry resembling those which had brought him on this dangerous undertaking on a night so fearful. This time, however, the cry was quite faint; and what was not so easily explained, it did not appear to come from the precise direction in which the wreck was known to lie, but from one that diverged considerably from that particular quarter. Of course, the officer mentioned this circumstance to the boat-steerer; and the extraordinary part of the information caused some particular discussion between them.

"To me that last call seemed to come from up yonder nearer to the cliffs than the place where we are, and not at all from down there, near to the sea, where the wrack is," said Stimson, in the course of his remarks. "So sartain am I of this, that I feel anxious to change our course a little, to see if it be not possible that one of the Vineyarders has got into some difficulty in trying to come across to us."

Roswell had the same desire, for he had made the same conjecture; though he did not believe the black would be the person chosen to be the messenger on such an occasion.

"I think Captain Daggett would have come himself or have sent one of his best men," he observed, "in preference to trusting a negro with a duty so important."

"We do not know, sir, that it was the nigger we heard. Misery makes much the same cries, whether it comes from the throat of white or black. Let us work upward, nearer to the cliffs, sir; I see something dark on the snow, hereaway, as it might be on our larboard bow."

Roswell caught a glimpse of the same object, and thither our adventurers now bent their steps, walking on the crust without any difficulty, so long as they kept out of the drifts. One does not find it so easy to make any physical effort in an intensely cold atmosphere, as he does when the weather is more moderate. This prevented Roswell and his companion from moving as fast as they otherwise might have done; but they got along with sufficient rapidity to reach the dark spot on the snow in less than five minutes after they had changed their course.

"You are right, Stephen," said Gardiner, as he came up to this speck, amid the immensity of the white mantle that covered both sea and land, far as the eye could reach; "it is the cook! The poor fellow has given out here, about half way between the two stations."

"There must be life in him yet, sir—nigger as he is. It's not yet twenty minutes since he gave that last cry. Help me to turn him over, Captain Gar'ner, and we will rub him, and give him a swallow of brandy. A little hot coffee, now, might bring the life back to his heart."

Roswell complied, first firing his pistol as a signal to those left behind. The negro was not dead, but so near it that a very few more minutes would have sealed his fate. The applications and frictions used by Gardiner and the boat-steerer had an effect. A swallow of the brandy probably saved the poor fellow's life. While working on his patient, Captain Gardiner found a piece of frozen pork, which, on examination, he ascertained had never been cooked. It at once explained the nature of the calamity that had befallen the crew of the wreck.

So intent were the two on their benevolent duty that a party arrived from the house, in obedience to the signal, in much less time than they could have hoped for. It was led by the mate, and came provided with a lamp burning beneath a tin vessel filled with sweetened coffee. This hot drink answered an excellent purpose with both well and sick. After a swallow or two, aided by a vigorous friction, and closely surrounded by so many human bodies, the black began to revive; and the sort of drowsy stupor which is known to precede death in those who die by freezing having been in a degree shaken off, he was

enabled to stand alone, and by means of assistance to walk. The hot coffee was of the greatest service, every swallow that he got down appearing to set the engine of life into new motion. The compelled exercise contributed its part; and by the time the mate, to use his own expression, "had run the nigger into dock," which meant when he had got him safe within the hut, his senses and faculties had so far revived as to enable him to think and to speak. As Gardiner and Stimson returned with him, everybody was up and listening, when the black told his story.

It would seem that during the terrible month which had just passed, Daggett had compelled his crew to use more exercise than had been their practice of late. Some new apprehension had come over him on the subject of fuel, and his orders to be saving in that article were most stringent, and very rigidly enforced. The consequence was that the caboose was not as well attended to as it had been previously, and as circumstances required, indeed, that it should be. At night the men were told to keep themselves warm with bedclothes, and by huddling together; and the cabin being small, so many persons crowded together in it did not fail to produce an impression on its atmosphere.

Such was the state of things, when, on going to his caboose, in order to cook the breakfast, this very black found the fire totally extinguished! Not a spark could he discover, even among the ashes; and, what was even worse, the tinder-box had disappeared. As respects the last, it may be well to state here, that it was afterward discovered carefully bestowed between two of the timbers of the wreck, with a view to particular safe keeping; the person who had made this disposition of it forgetting what he had done. The loss of the tinder-box, under the circumstances, was almost as great a calamity as could have befallen men in the situation of the Vineyarders. As against the cold, by means of bedclothes, exercise and other precautions, it might have been possible to exist for some time, provided warm food could be obtained; but the frost penetrated the cabin, and every one soon became sensitively alive to the awkwardness, not to say danger, of their condition. A whole day was passed in fruitless attempts to obtain fire by various processes. Friction did not succeed; it probably never does with the thermometer at zero. Sparks could be obtained, but by this time every thing was stiff with the frost. The food already cooked was soon as hard as bullets, and it was found that on the second night brandy that was exposed was converted into a lump of ice.

Not only did the intensity of the cold increase, but everything, even to the human system, seemed to be gradually congealing and preparing to become converted into receptacles for frost. Several of the men began to suffer in their ears, noses, feet, and other extremities, and the bunks were soon the only places in which it was found possible to exist in anything like comfort. No less than three men had been sent, at intervals of a few hours, across to the house, with a view to obtain fire, or the means of lighting one, along with other articles that were considered necessary to the safety of the people. The cook had been the third and last of these messengers. He had passed his two shipmates, each lying dead on the snow—or, as he supposed, lifeless; for neither gave the smallest sign of vitality, on an examination. It was in the agony of alarm produced by these appalling spectacles, that the negro had cried aloud for help, sending the sounds far enough to reach the ears of Roswell. Still he had persevered; until chilled, as much with terror as with the cold and the want of warm nourishment, the cook had sunk into what would have soon proved to be his last long sleep, when the timely succor arrived.

It was some two hours after the black had been got into the hut, and was strengthened with a good hot supper, ere he had communicated all the facts just related. Roswell succeeded, however, in getting a little at a time from him; and when no more remained to be related, the plan was already arranged for future proceedings. It was quite clear no unnecessary delay should be

permitted to take place. The cold continued to increase in intensity, notwithstanding it was the opinion of the most experienced among the men that a thaw, and a great spring thaw, was approaching. It often happens, in climates of an exaggerated character, that these extremes almost touch each other, as they are said to meet in man.

Roswell left the house for the second time that eventful night, just at the hour of twelve. He now went accompanied by the second mate and a foremast-hand, as well as by his old companion, the boat-steerer. Each individual drank a bowl of hot coffee before he set out, and a good warm supper had also been taken in the interval between the return and this new sortie. Experience shows that there is no such protector against the effect of cold as a full stomach, more especially if the food be warm and nourishing. This was understood by Roswell; and not only did he cause the whole party that set forth with him at that late and menacing hour to receive this sustenance, but he ordered the kettle of boiling coffee to be carried with them, and kept two lamps burning for the double purpose of maintaining the heat, and of having a fire ready on reaching the wreck. The oil of the sea-elephant, together with pieces of canvas prepared for the purpose, supplied the necessary materials.

So intensely severe was the weather that Roswell had serious thoughts of returning when he reached the spot where the black had been found. But the picture of Daggett's situation that occurred to his mind, urged him on, and he proceeded. Every precaution had been taken to exclude the cold, as it is usually termed, which, as it respects the body, means little less than keeping the vital heat in, and very useful were these provisions found to be. Skins formed the principal defense, though the men had long adopted the very simple but excellent expedient of wearing two shirts. Owing to this, and to the other measures taken, neither of the four was struck with a chill, and they all continued on.

At the place mentioned by the black, the body of one of Daggett's best men, a boat-steerer was found. The man was dead, of course, and the corpse was as rigid as a billet of wood. Every particle of moisture in it had congealed, until the whole of what had been a very fine and manly frame lay little more than a senseless lump of ice. A few degrees to the southward of the spot where it was now seen, it is probable that this relic of humanity would have retained its form and impression, until the trump sounded to summon it to meet its former tenant, the spirit, in judgment.

No time was lost in useless lamentations over the body of this man, who was much of a favorite among the Oyster Ponders. Twenty minutes later the second corpse was found; both the bodies lying in what was the customary track between the house and the wreck. It was the last that had died; but, like that of the unfortunate man just described, it was in a state to be preserved ten thousand years without the occurrence of a thaw. Merely glancing at the rigid features of the face, in order to identify the person, Roswell passed on, the chill feelings of every individual of his party now admonishing them all of the necessity of getting as soon as possible to some place where they could feel the influence of a fire. In ten minutes more, the whole were in the caverns of the ice, and presently, the cabin of the wreck was entered. Without turning to the right hand or to the left, without looking for one of the inmates of the place, every man among the new-comers turned his attention instantly to getting the fire lighted. The caboose had been filled with wood, and it was evident that many efforts had been made to produce a blaze, by those who had put it there. Splinters of pine had been inserted among the oak of the vessel, and nothing was wanting but the means of kindling. These, most fortunately for themselves, the party of Roswell had, and eagerly did they now have recourse to their use.

There was not a man among the Oyster Ponders who did not, just at that moment, feel his whole being concentrated in that one desire to obtain warmth. The

cold had slowly, but surely, insinuated itself among their garments, and slight chills were now felt even by Roswell, whose frame had been most wonderfully sustained that night, through the force of moral feeling. Stimson was the individual who was put forward at the caboose, others holding the lamps, canvas saturated with oil, and some prepared paper. It was found to be perceptibly warmer within the cabin, with its doors closed, and the external coverings of sails, etc., that had been made to exclude the air, than without; nevertheless, when Roswell glanced at a thermometer that was hanging against the bulk-head, he saw that all the mercury was still in the ball!

The interest with which our party now watched the proceedings of Stephen had much of that intensity that is known to attend any exhibition of vital importance. Life and death were, however, to be dependent on the issue; and the manner in which every eye was turned on the wood, and Stephen's mode of dealing with it, denoted how completely the dread of freezing had got possession of the minds of even these robust and generous men. Roswell alone ventured, for a single moment, to look around the cabin. Three of the Vineyarders only were visible in it; though it struck him that others lay in the berths, under piles of clothes. Of the three who were up, one was so near the lamp he held in his hand, that its light illumined his face, and all that could be seen of a form enveloped in skins. This man sat leaning against a transom. His eyes were open, and glared on the party around the caboose; the lips were slightly parted, and, at first, Roswell expected to hear him speak. The immovable features, rigid muscles, and wild expression of the eyeballs, however, soon told him the melancholy truth. The man was dead. The current of life had actually frozen at his heart. Shuddering, as much with horror as with a sharp chill that just then passed through his own stout frame, our young master turned anxiously to note the success of Stimson, in getting the wood of the caboose in a blaze.

Every one, in the least accustomed to a very severe climate, must have had frequent occasions to observe the reluctance with which all sorts of fuel burn, in exceedingly cold weather. The billet of wood that shall blaze merrily, on a mild day, molders and simmers, and seems indisposed to give out any heat at all, with the thermometer at zero. In a word, all inanimate substances that contain the elements of caloric appear to sympathize with the prevailing state of the atmosphere, and to contribute to render that which is already too cold for comfort, even colder. So it was now, notwithstanding the preparations that had been made. Baffled twice in his expectations of procuring a blaze, Stephen stopped and took a drink of the hot coffee. As he swallowed the beverage, it struck him that it was fast losing its warmth.

A considerable collection of canvas, saturated with oil, was now put beneath the pile, in the midst of splinters of pine, and one of the lamps was forced into the center of the combustibles. This expedient succeeded; the frosts were slowly chased out of the kindling materials; a sickly but gradually increasing flame strove through the kindling stuff and soon began to play among the billets of the oak, the only fuel that could be relied on for available heat. Still there was great danger that the lighter wood would all be consumed ere this main dependence could be aroused from its dull inactivity. Frost appeared to be in possession of the whole pile; and it was expelled so slowly, clung to its dominion with so much power, as really to render the result doubtful, for a moment or two. Fortunately, there was found a pair of bellows; and by means of a judicious use of this very useful implement, the oak wood was got into a bright blaze, and warmth began to be given out from the fire. Then came the shiverings and chills, with which intense cold consents even to abandon the human frame: and, by their number and force, Roswell was made to understand how near he and his companions had been to death.

As the young man saw the fire slowly kindle to a cheerful blaze, a glow of gratitude flowed toward his heart, and mental-

ly he returned thanks to God. The cabin was so small, had been made so tight by artificial means, and the caboose was so large, that a sensible influence was produced on the temperature, as soon as the wood began to burn a little freely. As none of the heat was lost, the effect was not only apparent, but most grateful. Roswell had looked into the vessels of the caboose, while the fire was gathering head. One, the largest, was filled, or nearly so, with coffee frozen to a solid mass! In the other, beef and pork had been set over to boil, and there the pieces now were, embedded in ice, and frozen to blocks. It was when these two distinct masses of ice began to melt, that it was known the fire was beginning to prevail, and hope revived in the bosoms of the Oyster Ponders. On taking another look at the thermometer, it was found that the mercury had so far expanded as to be leaving the ball. It soon after ascended so high as to denote only forty degrees below zero.

Everything, even to life, depending on maintaining and increasing the power of the fire, the men now looked about them for more fuel. There was an ample stock in the cabin, however, the fire having become extinguished, not for want of wood, but in the usual way. It were needless to describe the manner in which those who stood around the stove watched the flames, or how profound was their satisfaction when they saw that Stimson had finally succeeded.

"God be praised for this and for all his marcies!" exclaimed Stephen, laying aside the bellows at last. "I can feel warmth from the fire, and that will save such of us as have not been taken away." He then lifted the lids, and looked into the different vessels that were on. The ice was melting fast, and the steams of coffee became apparent to the senses. It was at this instant that a feeble voice was heard issuing from beneath the coverings of a berth.

"Gar'ner," it said, imploringly, "if you have any feelin' for a fellow-creatur' in distress, warm me up with one swallow of that coffee! Oh! how pleasantly it smells, and how good it must be for the stomach! For three days have I tasted nothing—not even water."

This was Daggett, the long-tried sealer; the man of iron nerves and golden longings: he who had so lately concentrated within himself all that was necessary to form a pertinacious, resolute, and grasping seeker after gain. How changed, now, in all this! He asked for the means of preserving life, and thought no more of skins, and oils, and treasures on desert keys.

Roswell was no sooner apprised of the situation of his brother-master, than he bestowed the necessary care on his wants. Fortunately, the coffee brought by the Oyster Ponders, and which retained some of its original warmth, had been set before the fire, and was now as hot as the human stomach could bear it. Two or three swallows of this grateful fluid were given to Daggett, and his voice almost instantaneously showed the effect they produced.

"I'm in a bad way, Gar'ner," resumed the Vineyard-master. "I fear we're all in a bad way, that are here. I held out ag'in the cold as long as human natur' could bear it, but was forced to give in at last."

"How many of your people still remain, Daggett? tell us that we may look for them, and attend to their wants."

"I'm afraid, Gar'ner, they'll never want anything more in this life! The second mate and two of the hands were sitting in the cabin when I got into this berth, and I fear 'twill be found that they're dead. I urged them to turn in, too, as the berths were the only place where anything like warmth was to be found; but drowsiness had come on 'em, and, when that is the case, freezin' soon follows."

"The three men in the cabin are past our assistance, being actually frozen into logs; but there must be several more of you. I see the signs of two others in the berths—ah! what do you say to that poor fellow, Stephen?"

"The spirit is still in the body, sir, but about to depart. If we can get him to swallow a little of the coffee, the

angel of death may yet loosen his hold on him."

The coffee was got down this man's throat, and he instantly revived. He was a young man named Lee, and was one of the finest physical specimens of strength and youth in the whole crew. On examining his limbs, none were found absolutely frozen, though the circulation of the blood was so near being checked that another hour of the great cold which had reigned in the cabin, and which was slowly increasing in intensity, must have destroyed him. On applying a similar process to Daggett, Roswell was startled at the discovery he made. The feet, legs, and forearms of the unfortunate Vineyarder were all as stiff and rigid as icicles. In these particulars there could be no mistake, and the men were immediately sent for snow, in order to extract the frost by the only safe process known to the sealers. The dead bodies were carried from the cabin, and laid decently on the ice, outside, the increasing warmth within rendering the removal advisable. On glancing again at the thermometer, now suspended in a remote part of the cabin, the mercury was found risen to two above zero. This was a very tolerable degree of cold, and the men began to lay aside some of their extra defenses against the weather, which would otherwise be of no service to them when exposed outside.

The crew of the Vineyard *Lion* had consisted of fifteen souls, one less than that of her consort. Of these men, four had lost their lives between the wreck and the house; two on a former, and two on the present occasion. Three bodies were found sitting in the cabin, and two more were taken out of the berths, dead. The captain, the cook, and Lee, added to these, made a dozen, leaving but three of the crew to be accounted for. When questioned on the subject, Lee said that one of those three had frozen to death in the caverns several days before and the other two had set out for the hut in the last snow-storm, unable to endure the cold at the wreck any longer. As these two men had not arrived at the house when Gardiner and his companions left it, they had perished, out of all doubt. Thus, of the fifteen human beings who had sailed together from Martha's Vineyard, ready to encounter every hazard in order to secure wealth, or what in their estimation was wealth, but three remained; and of these, two might be considered in a critical condition. Lee was the only man of the entire crew who was sound and fit for service.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,—
The overruling Infinite,—the Maker,—
Who made him not for worship,—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together."—BYRON.

WHEN the bodies had been removed from the cabin, and the limbs of Daggett were covered with snow, Roswell Gardiner took another look at the thermometer. It had risen already to twenty degrees above zero. This was absolutely warmth compared with the temperature from which the men had just escaped, and it was felt to be so, in their person. The fire, however, was not the only cause of this most acceptable change. One of the men who had been outside soon came back and reported a decided improvement in the weather. The wind, which had been coquetting with the northeast point of the compass for several hours, now blew steadily from that quarter. An hour later it was found, on examination, that a second thermometer, which was outside, actually indicated ten above zero! This sudden and great change came altogether from the wind, which was now in the warm quarter. The men stripped themselves of most of their skins, and the fire was suffered to go down, though care was taken that it should not again be totally extinguished.

We have little pleasure in exhibiting pictures of human suffering; and shall say but little of the groans and pains that Daggett uttered and endured, while undergoing that most agonizing process of having the frost taken out of his system by cold applications. It was the only safe way of treating his case, however, and as he knew it, he bore his sufferings as well

as man could bear them. Long ere the return of day he was released from his agony, and was put back into his berth, which had been comfortably arranged for him, having the almost unheard-of luxury of sheets, with an additional mattress.

Stephen remarked, when the men were told to try and get a little sleep, "There's plenty of berths empty, and each on us can have as many clothes and as warm a bed as he can ask for, now that so many have hastened away to their great account, as it might be, in the pride of their youth and strength."

Activity, the responsibility of command, and the great necessity there had been for exertion, prevented Roswell from reflecting much on what had happened, until he lay down to catch a little sleep. Then, indeed, the whole of the past came over him in one somber, terrible picture, and he had the most lively perception of the dangers from which he had escaped, as well as of the mercy of God's providence. Surrounded by the dead, as it might be, and still uncertain of the fate of the living, his views of the past and future became much lessened in confidence and hope. The majesty and judgment of God assumed a higher place than common in his thoughts, while his estimate of himself was fast getting to be humbled and searching. In the midst of all these changes of views and feelings, however, there was one image unaltered in the young man's imagination. Mary occupied the background of every picture, with her meek, gentle, but blooming countenance. If he thought of God, *her* eyes were elevated in prayer; if the voyage home was in his mind, and the chances of success were calculated, *her* smiles and anxious watchfulness stimulated him to adventure; if arrived and safe, her downcast but joyful looks betrayed the modest happiness of her inmost heart. It was in the midst of some such pictures that Roswell now fell asleep.

When the party turned out in the morning, a still more decided change had occurred in the weather. The wind had increased to a gale, bringing with it torrents of rain. Coming from the warm quarter, a thaw had set in with a character quite as decided as the previous frost. In that region the weather is usually exaggerated in its features, and the change from winter to spring is quite as sudden as that from autumn to winter. We use the terms "spring" and "autumn" out of complaisance to the usages of men; but in fact these two seasons have scarcely any existence at all in the antarctic seas. The change commonly is from winter to summer, such as summer is, and from summer back to winter.

Notwithstanding the favorable appearances of things when Roswell walked out into the open air next morning, he well knew that summer had not yet come. Many weeks must go by ere the ice could quit the bay, and even a boat could put to sea. There were considerations of prudence, therefore, that should not be neglected, connected with the continuance of the supplies and the means of subsistence. In one respect, the party now on the island had been gainers by the terrible losses it had sustained in Daggett's crew. The provisions of the two vessels might now virtually be appropriated to the crew of one; and Roswell, when he came to reflect on the circumstances, saw that a Providential interference had probably saved the survivors from great privations, if not from absolute want.

Still there was a thaw, and one of that decided character which marks a climate of great extremes. The snows on the mountain soon began to descend upon the plain in foaming torrents, and increased by the tribute received from the last, the whole came tumbling over the cliffs in various places in rich waterfalls. There was about a mile of rock that was one continuous cataract, the sheet being nearly unbroken for the whole distance. The effect of this deluge from the plain above was as startling as it was grand. All the snow along the rocky shore soon disappeared, and the fragments of ice began rapidly to diminish in size, and to crumble. At first Roswell felt much concern on account of the security of the wreck; his original apprehension being that it would

be washed away. This ground of fear was soon succeeded by another of scarcely less serious import—that of its being crushed by the enormous cakes of ice that made the caverns in which it lay, and which now began to settle and change their positions, as the water washed away their bases. At one time Roswell thought of setting the storm at defiance, and of carrying Daggett across to the house by means of the hand-barrow; but when he came to look at the torrents of water that were crossing the rocks, so many raging rivulets, the idea was abandoned as impracticable. Another night was therefore passed in the midst of the tempest.

The northeast wind, the rain, and the thaw were all at work in concert when our adventurers came aboard to look upon the second day of their sojourn in the wreck. By this time the caverns were dripping with a thousand little streams, and every sign denoted a most rapid melting of the ice. On carrying the thermometer into the open air it stood at sixty-two, and the men found it necessary to lay aside their second shirt, and all the extraordinary defenses of their attire. Nor was this all; the wind that crosses the salt water is known to have more than the usual influence on the snows and ice; and such was the effect now produced by it on Sealer's Land. The snow, indeed, had mostly disappeared from all places but the drifts, while the ice was much diminished in its size and outlines. So grateful was the change from the extreme cold that they had so lately endured, that the men thought nothing of the rain at all; they went about in it just as if it did not stream down upon them in little torrents. Some of them clambered up the clifts and reached a point whence it was known that they could command a view of the house. The return of this party, which Roswell did not accompany, was waited for with a good deal of interest. When it got back it brought a report that was deemed important in several particulars. The snow had gone from the plain, and from the mountain, with the exception of a few spots where there had been unusual accumulations of it. As respected the house, it was standing, and the snow had entirely disappeared from its vicinity. The men could be seen walking about on the bare rocks, and every symptom was that of settled spring.

This was cheering news; and the torrents having much diminished in size, some having disappeared altogether, Roswell set out for the cape, leaving the second mate in charge of the wreck. Lee, the young Vineyarder who had been rescued from freezing by the timely arrival of our hero, accompanied the latter, having joined his fortunes to those of the Oyster Ponders. The two reached the house before dark, where they found Hazard and his companions in a good deal of concern touching the fate of the party that was out. A deep impression was made by the report of what had befallen the other crew; and that night Roswell read prayers to as attentive a congregation as was ever assembled around a domestic hearth. As for fire, none was now needed, except for culinary purposes, though all the preparations to meet cold weather were maintained, it being well known that a shift of wind might bring back the fury of the winter.

The following morning it was clear, though the wind continued warm and balmy from the north. No such weather, indeed, had been felt by the sealers since they reached the group; and the effect on them was highly cheering and enlivening. Before he had breakfasted, Roswell was down in the cove, examining into the condition of the vessel, or what remained of her. A good deal of frozen snow still lay heaped on the mass, and he set the hands at work to shovel it off. Before noon the craft was clear, and most of the snow was melted, it requiring little more than exposure to the air in order to get rid of it.

As soon as the hulk was clear, Roswell directed his men to take everything out of it; the remains of cargo, water-casks, and some frozen provisions, in order that it might float as light as possible. The ice was frozen close to every part of the vessel's bottom to a depth of several feet, following her mold, a circumstance that would necessarily prevent her settling in

the water below her timbers; but, as there was no telling when this ice might begin to recede by melting, it was deemed prudent to use this precaution. It was found that the experiment succeeded, the hulk actually rising, when relieved from the weight in it, not less than four inches.

A consultation was held that night, between Gardiner, his officers, and the oldest of the seamen. The question presented was whether the party should attempt to quit the group in the boats, or whether they should build a little on the hulk, deck her over, and make use of this altered craft to return to the northward. There was a good deal to be said on both sides. If the boats were used, the party might leave as soon as the weather became settled, and the season a little more advanced, by dragging the boats on sledges across the ice to the open water, which was supposed to be some ten or twenty miles to the northward, and a large amount of provisions might thus be saved. On the other hand, however, as it regarded the provisions, the boats would hold so little, that no great gain would be made by going early in them, and leaving a sufficient supply behind to keep all hands two or three months. This was a consideration that presented itself, and it had its weight in the decision. Then there was the chance of the winter's returning, bringing with it the absolute necessity of using a great deal more fuel. This was a matter of life and death. Comparatively pleasant as the weather had become, there was no security for its so continuing. One entire spring month was before the sealers, and a shift of wind might convert the weather into a wintry temperature. Should such be the case, it might become indispensable to burn the very materials that would be required to build up and deck over the hulk. There were, therefore, many things to be taken into the account; nor was the question settled without a great deal of debate and reflection.

After discussing all these points, the decision was as follows: It was at least a month too soon to think of trusting themselves in that stormy ocean, on the high seas and in the open boats; and this so much the more because Nature, as if expressly to send back a reasonable amount of warm air into the polar regions, with a view to preserve the distinction of the seasons, caused the wind to blow most of the time from the northward. As this month, in all prudence, must be passed on the island, it might as well be occupied with building upon the hulk, as in any other occupation. Should the cold weather return, the materials would still be there, and might be burned, in the last extremity, just as well, or even with greater facility, after being brought over to the cove, as if left where they then were, or at the wreck. Should the winter not return, the work done on the vessel would be so much gained, and they would be ready for an earlier start, when the ice should move.

On this last plan the duty was commenced, very little interrupted by the weather. For quite three weeks the wind held from points favorable to the progress of spring, veering from east to west, but not once getting any southing in it. Occasionally it blew in gales, sending down upon the group a swell that made great havoc with the outer edges of the field-ice. Every day or two a couple of hands were sent up the mountain to take a lookout, and to report the state of matters in the adjacent seas. The fleet of bergs had not yet come out of port, though it was in motion to the southward, like three-deckers dropping down to outer anchorages, in roadsteads and bays. As Roswell intended to be off before these formidable cruisers put to sea, their smallest movement or change was watched and noted. As for the field-ice, it was broken up, miles at a time, until there remained very little of it, with the exception of the portion that was wedged in and jammed among the islands of the group. From some cause that could not be ascertained, the waves of the ocean, which came tumbling in before the northern gales, failed to roll home upon this ice, which lost its margin, now it was reduced to the limits of the group, slowly and with great resistance. Some of the sealers ascribed this

obstinacy in the bay-ice to its greater thickness; believing that the shallowness of the water had favored a frozen formation below, that did not so much prevail off soundings. This theory may have been true, though there was quite as much against it as in its favor, for polar ice usually increases above and not from below. The sea is much warmer than the atmosphere, in the cold months, and the ice is made by deposits of snow, moisture, and sleet, on the surfaces of the fields and bergs.

In those three weeks, which carried forward the season to within ten days of summer, a great deal of useful work was done. Daggett was brought over to the house, on a handbarrow, for the second time, and made as comfortable as circumstances would allow. From the first, Roswell saw that his state was very precarious, the frozen legs, in particular, being threatened with mortification. All the expedients known to the sealer's *materia medica* were resorted to, in order to avert consequences so serious, but without success. The circulation could not be restored, as Nature required it to be done, and failing of the support derived from a healthful condition of the vital current, the fatal symptoms slowly supervened. This change, however, was so gradual, that it scarce affected the regular course of the duty.

It was a work of great labor to transport the remaining timbers and plank of the wreck to the cove. Without the wheels, indeed, it may be questioned whether it could have been done at all, in a reasonable time. The breaking up of the schooner was, in itself, no trifling job, for fully one half of the frame remained to be pulled to pieces. In preparing the materials for use, again, a good deal of embarrassment was experienced in consequence of the portions of the two vessels that were left being respectively their lower bodies, all the upper works of each having been burned, with the exception of the after part of Daggett's craft, which had been preserved on account of the cabin. This occasioned a good deal of trouble in molding and fitting the new upper works on the hulk in the cove. Roswell had no idea of rebuilding his schooner strictly in her old form and proportions; he did not, indeed, possess the materials for such a reconstruction. His plan was, simply, to raise on the hulk as much as was necessary to render her safe and convenient, and then to get as good and secure a deck over all as circumstances would allow.

Fortunately for the progress of the work, Lee, the Vineyard man, was a ship-carpenter, and his skill essentially surpassed that of Smith, who filled the same station on board the Oyster Pond craft. These two men were now of the greatest service; for, though neither understood drafting, each was skilled in the use of tools, and a certain readiness that enabled him to do a hundred things that he had never found it necessary to attempt on any former occasion. If the upper frame that was now got on the *Sea Lion* was not of a faultless mold, it was securely fastened, and rendered the craft even stronger than it had been originally. Some regard was had to resisting the pressure of ice, and experience had taught all the sealers where the principal defenses against the effects of a "nip" ought to be placed. The lines were not perfect, it is true; but this was of less moment, as the bottom of the craft, which alone had any material influence on her sailing, was just as it had come from the hands of the artisan who had originally molded her.

By the end of a fortnight the new top-timbers were all in their places and secured, while a complete set of bends were brought to them, and were well bolted. The caulking-irons were put in requisition as soon as a streak was on, the whole work advancing, as it might be, *pari passu*. Planks for the decks were much wanted, for, in the terrible strait for fuel which had caused the original assault on the schooner, this portion of the vessel had been the first burned, as of the most combustible materials. The quarter-deck of the Vineyard craft, luckily, was entire, and its planks so far answered an excellent purpose. They served to make a new quarter-deck for the repairs,

but the whole of the main-deck and forecastle remained to be provided for. Materials were gleaned from different parts of the two vessels, until a reasonably convenient, and a perfectly safe deck was laid over the whole craft, the coamings for the hatches being taken from Daggett's schooner, which had not been broken up in those parts. It is scarcely necessary to say that the ice had early melted from the rocks of the coast. The caverns all disappeared within the first week of the thaw, the attitudes into which the cakes had been thrown greatly favoring the melting process, by exposing so much surface to the joint action of wind, rain, and sun. What was viewed as a favorable augury, the seals began to reappear. There was a remote portion of the coast, from which the ice had been driven by the winds around the northwest cape, that was already alive with them. Alas! these animals no longer awakened cupidity in the breasts of the sealers. The last no longer thought of gain, but simply of saving their lives, and of restoring themselves to the humble places they had held in the world previously to having come on this ill-fated voyage.

This reappearance of the seals produced a deep impression on Roswell Gardiner. His mind had been much inclined of late to dwell more and more on religious subjects, and his conversations with Stephen were still more frequent than formerly. Not that the boat-steerer could enlighten him on the great subject, by any learned lore, for in this Stimson was quite deficient; but his officer found encouragement in the depth and heartiness of his companion's faith, which seemed to be raised above all doubts and misgivings whatever. During the gloomiest moments of that fearful winter, Stephen had been uniformly confiding and cheerful. Not once had he been seen to waver, though all around him were desponding and anticipating the worst. His heart was light exactly in proportion as his faith was strong.

"We shall neither freeze nor starve," he used to say, "unless it be God's will; and, when it is his pleasure, depend on it, friends, it will be for our good." As for Daggett, he had finally given up his hold on the wreck, and it seemed no longer to fill his thoughts. When he was told that the seals had come back, his eyes brightened, and his nature betrayed some of its ardent longings. But it was no more than a gleaming of the former spirit of the man, now becoming dim under the darkness that was fast encircling all his views of the world.

"It's a pity, Gar'ner, that we have no craft ready for the work," he said, under the first impulse of the intelligence. "At this early time in the season, a large ship might be filled!"

"We have other matters on our hands, Captain Daggett," was the answer; "they must be looked to first. If we can get off the island at all, and return safe to those who, I much fear, are now mourning us as dead, we shall have great reason to thank God."

"A few skins would do no great harm, Gar'ner, even to a craft cut down and reduced."

"We have more cargo now than we shall be able to take with us. Quite one-half of all our skins must be left behind us, and all of the oil. The hold of the schooner is too shallow to carry enough of anything to make out a voyage. I shall ballast with water and provisions, and fill up all the spare room with the best of our skins. The rest of the property must be abandoned."

"Why abandoned? Leave a hand or two to take care of it, and send a craft out to look for it as soon as you get home. Leave me, Gar'ner, I am willing to stay."

Roswell thought that the poor man would be left, whether he wished to remain or not, for the symptoms that are known to be so fatal in cases like that of Daggett's were making themselves so apparent as to leave little doubt of the result. What rendered this display of the master-passion somewhat remarkable was the fact that our hero had on several occasions conversed with the invalid, concealing no material feature of his case, and the latter had expressed his expectation of a fatal termination, if not an absolute willingness to die. Stimson had

frequently prayed with Daggett, and Roswell had often read particular chapters of the Bible to him, at his own request, creating an impression that the Vineyarder was thinking more of his end than of any interest connected with this life. Such might have been, probably *was* the case, until the seeming return of what had once been deemed good luck awakened old desires, and brought out traits of character that were about to be lost in the near views of a future world. All this Roswell saw and noted, and the reflection produced by his own perilous condition, the certain loss of so many companions, the probable death of Daggett, and the humble but impressive example and sympathy of Stimson, were such as would have delighted the tender spirit of Mary Pratt, could she have known of their existence.

But the great consideration of the moment, the center of all the hopes and fears of our sealers, was the rebuilding of the mutilated *Sea Lion*. Although the long thaw did so much for them, the reader is not to regard it as such a spell of warm weather as one enjoys in May within the temperate zone. There were no flowers, no signs of vegetation, and whenever the wind ceased to blow smartly from the northward, there was frost. At two or three intervals cold snaps set in that looked seriously like a return to winter, and at the end of the third week of pleasant weather mentioned, it began to blow a gale from the southward, to snow, and to freeze. The storm commenced about ten in the forenoon; ere the sun went down, the days then being of great length, every passage around the dwelling was already blocked up with banks of snow. Several times had the men asked permission to remove the sails from the house, to admit air and light; but it was now found that the tent-like veranda they formed was of as much use as it had been at any time during the season. Without it, indeed, it would not have been possible for the people to quit their dwelling during three entire days. Everything like work was, of course, suspended during this tempest, which seriously menaced the unfortunate sealers with the necessity of again breaking up their schooner, now nearly completed, with a view again to keep themselves from freezing. The weather was not so intensely cold as it had been, continuously, for months during the past winter; but, coming as it did, after so long a spell of what might be considered as a balmy atmosphere in that region, it found the people unbraced, and little prepared for it.

At no time was the thermometer lower than twenty degrees below zero; this was near morning, after a sharp and stinging night; nor was it for any succession of hours much below zero. But zero was now hard to bear, and fires, and good fires too, were absolutely necessary to keep the men from suffering, as well as from despondency. Perhaps the spectacle of Daggett, dying from the effects of frost, before their eyes, served to increase the uneasiness of the people, and to cause them to be less sparing of the fuel than persons in their situations ought to have been. It is certain that a report was brought to Roswell, in the height of the tempest, and when the thermometer was at the lowest, that there was not wood enough left from the plunder of the two vessels, exclusively of that which had been worked up in the repairs, to keep the fires going eight-and-forty hours longer! It was true, a little wood, intended to be used in the homeward passage, enough to last as far as Rio possibly, had been used in stowing the hold; and that might be got at first, if it ever ceased to snow. Without that addition to the stock in the house, it would not be within the limits of probability to suppose the people could hold out against the severity of such weather a great while longer.

Every expedient that could be devised to save wood, and to obtain warmth from other sources, was resorted to, of course, by Roswell's orders. Lamps were burned with great freedom; not little vessels invented to give light, but such torches as one sees at the lighting up of a princely courtyard on the occasion of a *fête*, in which wicks are made by the pound, and

unctuous matter is used by the gallon. Old canvas and elephants' oil supplied the materials; and the spare caboose, which had been brought over to the house to be set up there, while the other galley was being placed on board, very well answered the purpose of a lamp. Some warmth was obtained by these means, but much more of a glaring and unpleasant light.

It was during the height of this tempest that the soul of Daggett took its flight toward the place of departed spirits, in preparation for the hour when it was to be summoned before the judgment-seat of God. Previously to his death, the unfortunate Vineyarder held a frank and confidential discourse with Roswell. As his last hour approached, his errors and mistakes became more distinctly apparent, as is usual with men, while his sins of omission seemed to crowd the vista of bygone days. Then it was that the whole earth did not contain that which, in his dying eyes, would prove an equivalent for one hour passed in a sincere, devout, and humble service of the Deity!

"I'm afraid that I've loved money most too well," he said to Roswell, not an hour before he drew his last breath; "but I hope it was not so much for myself as for others. A wife and children, Gar'ner, tie a man to 'arth in a most unaccountable manner. Sealers' companions are used to hearing of misfortunes, and the Vineyard women know that few on 'em live to see a husband at their side in old age. Still, it is hard on a mother and wife to l'arn that her chosen friend has been cut off in the pride of his days, and in a distant land. Poor Betsy! It would have been better for us both had we been satisfied with the little we had; for now the good woman will have to look to all matters for herself."

Daggett now remained silent for some time, though his lips moved, most probably in prayer. It was a melancholy sight to see a man in the vigor of his manhood, whose voice was strong, and whose heart was still beating with vigor and vitality, standing, as it were, on the brink of a precipice, down which all knew he was to be so speedily hurled. But the decree had gone forth, and no human skill could arrest it. Shortly after the confession and lamentation we have recorded, the decay reached the vitals, and the machine of clay stopped. To avoid the unpleasant consequences of keeping the body in so warm a place, it was buried in the snow a short distance from the house, within an hour after it had ceased to breathe.

When Roswell Gardiner saw this man, who had so long adhered to him like a leech, in the pursuit of gold, laid a senseless corpse among the frozen flakes of the antarctic seas, he felt that a lively admonition of the vanity of the world was administered to himself. How little had he been able to foresee all that had happened, and how mistaken had been his own calculations and hopes! What, then, was that intellect of which he had been so proud, and what reason had he to rely on himself in those matters that lay equally beyond the cradle and the grave—that incomprehensible past, and the unforeseen future toward which all those in existence were hastening! Roswell had received many lessons in humility, the most useful of all the lessons that man can receive in connection with the relation that really exists between the Deity and himself. Often had he wondered, while reading the Bible Mary Pratt had put into his hand, at the stubborn manner in which the chosen people of God had returned to their "idols," and their "groves," and their "high places;" but he was now made to understand that others still erred in this great particular, and that of all the idols men worship, that of self was perhaps the most objectionable.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Long swoln in drenching rains, seeds, germs, and buds,
Start at the touch of vivifying beams.
Moved by their secret voice, the vital lymph
Diffusive runs, and spreads o'er wood and field
A flood of verdure."—WILCOX.

AT length it came to be rumored among the sealers that the fires must be permitted to go out, or that the materials

used for making the berths, and various other fixtures of the house, must be taken to supply the stove. It was when it got to be known that the party was reduced to this sad dilemma that Roswell broke through the bank of snow that almost covered the house, and got so far into the open air as to be able to form some estimate of the probable continuance of the present cold weather. The thermometer, within the bank of snow, but outside of the building, then stood at twenty below zero; but it was much colder in the unobstructed currents of as keen and biting a south wind as ever came howling across the vast fields of ice that covered the polar basin. The snow had long ceased, but not until an immense quantity had fallen; nearly twice as much, Roswell and Hazard thought, as they had seen on the rocks at any time that winter.

"I see no signs of a change, Mr. Hazard," Roswell remarked, shivering with the intensity of the cold. "We had better go back into the house before we get chilled, for we have no fire now to go to, to warm ourselves. It is much warmer within doors than it is in the open air, fire or no fire."

"There are many reasons for that, Captain Gar'ner," answered the mate. "So many bodies in so small a space, the shelter from the outer wind and outer air, and the snow-banks, all help us. I think we shall find the thermometer in-doors at a pretty comfortable figure this morning."

On examining it, it was found to stand at only fifteen below zero, making a difference of five degrees in favor of the house, as compared with the sort of covered gallery under the tent, and probably of five more, as compared with the open air.

On a consultation, it was decided that all hands should eat a hearty meal, remove most of their clothes, and get within the coverings of their berths, to see if it would not be possible to wear out the cold spell, in some tolerable comfort, beneath rugs and blankets. On the whole it was thought that the berths might be made more serviceable by this expedient, than by putting their materials into the stoves. Accordingly, within an hour after Roswell and his mate had returned from their brief out-door excursion, the whole party was snugly bestowed under piles of rugs, clothes, sails, and whatever else might be used to retain the animal heat near the body, and exclude cold. In this manner six-and-thirty hours were passed, not a man of them all having the courage to rise from his lair, and encounter the severity of the climate, now unrelieved by anything like a fire.

Roswell had slept most of the time during the last ten hours, and in this he was much like all around him. A general feeling of drowsiness had come over the men, and the legs and feet of many among them, notwithstanding the quantity of bedclothes that were, in particular, piled on that part of their person, were sensitively alive to the cold. No one ever knew how low the thermometer went that fearful night; but a sort of common consciousness prevailed, that nothing the men had yet seen, or felt, equaled its chill horrors. The cold had got into the house, converting every article it contained into a mass of frost. The berths ceased to be warm, and the smallest exposure of a shoulder, hand, or ears, soon produced pain. The heads of very many of the party were affected, and breathing became difficult and troubled. A numbness began to steal over the lower limbs; and this was the last unpleasant sensation remembered by Roswell, when he fell into another short and disturbed slumber. The propensity to sleep was very general now, though many struggled against it, knowing it was the usual precursor of death by freezing.

Our hero never knew how long he slept in the last nap he took on that memorable occasion. When he awoke, he found a bright light blazing in the hut, and heard some one moving about the caboose. Then his thoughts reverted to himself, and to the condition of his limbs. On trying to rub his feet together, he found them so nearly without sensation as to make the consciousness of their touching each other almost out of the question. Taking the alarm at once, he commenced a violent friction, until by slow degrees he could

feel that the nearly stagnant blood was getting again into motion. So great had been Roswell's alarm, and so intent his occupation, that he took no heed of the person who was busy at the caboose, until the man appeared at the side of his berth, holding a tin pot in his hand. It was Stimson, up and dressed, without his skins, and seemingly in perfect preservation.

"Here's some hot coffee, Captain Gar'ner," said the provident boat-steerer, "and then turn out. The wind has shifted, by the marcy of God, and it has begun to rain. *Now*, I think we may have summer in 'arnest, as summer comes among these sealin' islands."

Roswell took six or eight swallows of the coffee, which was smoking hot, and instantly felt the genial influence diffused over his whole frame. Sending Stephen to the other berths with this timely beverage, he now sat up in his berth, and rubbed his feet and legs with his hands. The exercise, friction, and hot coffee, soon brought him round; and he sprang out of his berth, and was quickly dressed. Stimson had lighted a fire in the caboose, using the very last of the wood, and the warmth was beginning to diffuse itself through the building. But the change in the wind, and the consequent melioration of the temperature, probably alone saved the whole of the Oyster Pond crew from experiencing the dire fate of that of the Vineyard craft.

Stephen got man after man out of his berth, by doses of the steaming coffee; and the blood being thus stimulated, by the aid of friction, everybody was soon up and stirring. It was found, on inquiry, that all three of the blacks had toes or ears frozen, and with them the usual application of snow became necessary; but the temperature of the house soon got to be so high as to render the place quite comfortable. Warm food being deemed very essential, Stephen put a supply of beans and pork into his hopper; and the frost having been extracted from a quantity of the bread by soaking it in cold water, a hearty meal of good, hot, and most nourishing food, was made by all hands. This set our sealers up, no more complaints of the frost being heard.

It was, indeed, no longer very cold. The thermometer was up to twenty-six above zero in the house when Roswell turned out; and the cooking process, together with Stephen's fires and the shift of wind, soon brought the mercury up to forty. This was a cheering temperature for those who had been breathing the polar air; and the influence of the north-east gale continued to increase. The rain and thaw produced another deluge; and the cliffs presented, for several hours, a sight that might have caused Niagara to hide her head in mortification. These sublime scenes are of frequent occurrence amid the solitudes of the earth; the occasional phenomena of Nature often surpassing in sublimity and beauty her rarest continued efforts.

The succeeding day the rain ceased, and summer appeared to have come in reality. It is true that at midday the thermometer in the shade stood at only forty-eight; but in the sun it actually rose to seventy. Let those who have ever experienced the extremes of heat and cold imagine the delight with which our sealers moved about under such a sun! All excess of clothing was thrown aside; and many of the men actually pursued their work in their shirt-sleeves.

As the snow had vanished quite as suddenly as it came, everything and everybody was now in active motion. Not a man of the crew was disposed to run the risk of encountering any more cold on Sealer's Land. Roswell himself was of opinion that the late severe weather was the dying effort of the winter, and that no more cold was to be expected; and Stimson agreed with him in this notion. The sails were taken down from around the house, and those articles it was intended to carry away were transferred to the schooner as fast as the difficulties of the road would allow. While his mates were carrying on this duty, our young master took an early occasion to examine the state of matters generally on the island. With this view he ascended to the plain, and went half-way up the moun-

tain, desiring to get a good look into the offing.

It was soon ascertained that the recent deluge had swept all the ice and every trace of the dead into the sea. The body of Daggett had disappeared with the snow-bank in which it had been buried; and all the carcasses of the seals had been washed away. In a word, the rocks were as naked and as clean as if man's foot had never passed over them. From the facts that skeletons of seals had been found strewed along the north shore, and the present void, Roswell was led to infer that the late storm had been one of unusual intensity, and most probably of a character to occur only at long intervals.

But the state of the ice was the point of greatest interest. The schooner could now be got ready for sea in a week, and that easily; but there she lay, imbedded in a field of ice that still covered nearly the whole of the waters within the group. As Roswell stood on the cliffs which overlooked the cove, he calculated the distance it would be necessary to take the schooner through the ice by sawing and cutting, and that through a field known to be some four feet thick, and five good miles at least. So Herculean did this task appear to be, that he even thought of abandoning his vessel altogether, and of setting out in the boats, as soon as the summer was fairly commenced. On reflection, however, this last plan was reserved as a *dernier ressort*, the danger of encountering the tempests of those seas in a whale-boat, without covering or fire, being much too great to be thought of, so long as any reasonable alternative offered.

The bergs to the southward were in motion, and a large fleet of them was putting to sea, as it might be, coming in from those remote and then unknown regions in which they were formed. From the mountain our hero counted at least a hundred, all regular shaped, with tops like that of table-land, and with even, regular sides, and upright attitudes. It was very desirable to get ahead of these new maritime Alps, for the ocean to the northward was unusually clear of ice of all kinds, that lodged between the islands excepted.

So long as it was safe to calculate on the regular changes of the seasons, Roswell knew that patience and vigilance would serve his turn, by bringing everything round in its proper time and place. But it was by no means certain that it was a usual occurrence for the Great Bay to be crammed with field-ice, as had happened the past winter; if the actual state of the surrounding waters were an exception instead of the rule. On examining the shores, however, it was found that the rain and melted snow had created a sort of margin, and that the strong winds which had been blowing, and which in fact were still blowing, had produced a gradually increasing attrition, until a space existed between the weather-side of the field and the rocks that was some thirty fathoms wide. This was an important discovery, and brought up a most grave question for decision.

Owing to the shape of the surrounding land, it would not be possible for the ice to float out in a body for two or three months to come; or until so much had melted as to leave room for the field to pass the capes and headlands. It never could have entered the bay for the same reason, but for the resistless power of a field that extended leagues out into the ocean, where, acted on jointly by wind and tide, it came down with a momentum that was resistless, ripping and tearing the edges of the field as if they had been so much freshly turned-up mould. It was, then, a question how to get the schooner out of her present bed, and into clear water.

The reader will probably remember that, on her first arrival at the group, the *Sea Lion* had entered the Great Bay from the southward; while, in her subsequent effort to get north, she had gone out by the opposite passage. Now, it occurred to Roswell that he might escape by the former of these routes more readily than by the latter, and for the following reasons: No field-ice had ever blocked up the southern passage, which was now quite clear, though the approach to it just

then was choked by the manner in which the northeast gale, that was still blowing, pressed home against the rocks the field that so nearly filled the bay. A shift of wind, however, must soon come; and, when that change occurred, it was certain that this field would move in an opposite direction, leaving the margin of open water, that has already been mentioned, all along the rocks. The distance was considerable, it is true—not less than fifteen miles—and the whole of it was to be made quite close to sharp angular rocks that would penetrate the schooner's side almost as readily as an axe, in the event of a nip; but this danger might be avoided by foresight, and a timely attention to the necessities of the case. Seeing no more available plan to get the vessel out of her present duress, the mates came readily into this scheme, and preparations were made to carry it out. As the cove was so near the northeast end of Sealer's Land, it may be well to explain that the reason this same mode of proceeding could not be carried out in a northern direction, was the breadth of the field seaward, and the danger of following the north shore when the solid ice did leave it, on account of the quantities of broken fragments that were tossing and churning in its front, far as the eye could reach from the cliffs themselves.

The third day after the commencement of the thaw, the wind came around again from the southwest, blowing heavily. As was expected, this soon began to set the field in motion, driving it over toward the volcano, and at the same time northerly. About six in the morning, Hazard brought a report to Roswell that a margin of open water was beginning to form all along under the cliffs, while there was great danger that the channel which had been cut from the schooner to the nearest point beneath the rocks, in readiness for this very contingency, might be closed by the pressure of the ice without on that within the cove. No time was to be lost, therefore, if it was intended to move the craft on this shift of wind. The distance that had been sawed through to make the channel just named did not exceed a hundred yards. The passage was not much wider than the schooner's breadth; and it will be easily understood that it was to the last degree important to carry her through this strait as soon as possible.

Although many useful articles were scattered about on the ice, and several remained to be brought over the rocks from the house, the order was given to get out lines, and to move the vessel at once: the men set to work with hearty good-will, another glimpse of home rising before their imaginations; and, in five minutes after Hazard had made his communication, the *Sea Lion* had gone six or eight times her length toward the cliffs. Then came the pinch! Had not the ice been solid between the cape and the berth just before occupied by the schooner, she would have been hopelessly nipped by the closing of the artificial channel. As it was, she was caught, and her progress was arrested, but the field took a cant, in consequence of the resistance of the solid ice that filled the whole cove to the eastward of the channel; and, before any damage was done, the latter began to open even faster than it had come together. The instant the craft was released, the sealers manned their hauling lines again, and ran her up to the rocks with a hurrah! The margin of water was just opening, but so prompt had been the movement of the men that it was not yet wide enough to permit the vessel to go any further; and it was found necessary to wait until the passage was sufficiently wide to enable her to move ahead. The intervening time was occupied in bringing to the craft the articles left behind.

By nine o'clock everything was on board; the winding channel that followed the sinuosities of the coast could be traced far as the eye could see; the lines were manned; and the word was again given to move. Roswell now felt that he was engaged in much the most delicate of all his duties. The desperate run through the fleet of bergs, and the second attempt to get to sea, were not in certain particulars as hazardous as this. The field had been setting back and forth now for

several weeks; the margin of clear water increasing by the attrition at each return to the rocks; and it was known by observation that these changes often occurred at very short notices. Should the wind haul round with the sun, or one of the unaccountable currents of those seas intervene before the southeast cape was reached, the schooner would probably be broken into splinters, or ground into powder, in the course of some two or three hours. It was all-important, therefore, to lose not a moment.

Several times in the course of the first hour the movement of the schooner was arrested by the want of sufficient room to pass between projecting points in the cliffs and the edge of the ice. On two of these occasions passages were cut with the saw, the movement of the field not answering to the impatience of the sealers. At the end of that most momentous hour, however, the craft had been hauled ahead a mile and a half, and had reached a curvature in the coast where the margin of open water was more than fifty fathoms wide, and the tracking of the vessel became easy and rapid. By two o'clock the *Sea Lion* was at what might be called the bottom of the Great Bay, some three or four leagues from the cove, and at the place where the long low cape began to run out in a southeasterly direction. As the wind could now be felt over the rocks, the foretopsail was set, as well as the lower sails, the latter being mainly becalmed, however, by the land, when the people were all taken on board, the craft moving faster under her canvas than by means of the hauling lines. The wind was very fresh, and in half an hour more the southeast cape came in sight, close as were the navigators to the rocks. Ten minutes later the *Sea Lion* was under reefed sails, stretching off to the southward and eastward, in perfectly clear water!

At first Roswell Gardiner was disposed to rejoice, under the impression that his greatest labor had been achieved. A better look at the state of things around him, however, taught the disheartening lesson of humility, by demonstrating that they had in truth but just commenced.

Although there was scarcely any field-ice to the southward of the group, and in its immediate neighborhood, there was a countless number of bergs. It is true, these floating mountains did not come near the passage, for the depth of water just there usually brought them up ere they could get into it; nevertheless, a large fleet of them was blockading the entire group, as far as the eye could reach, looking east, west, and south, or along the whole line of the southern coast. It was at first questionable whether, and soon after it became certain, that the schooner could never beat through such dangers. Had the wind been fair, the difficulty would have been insurmountable; but ahead, and blowing a little gale, the matter was out of the question. Some other course must be adopted.

There was a choice of alternatives. One was to go entirely round the whole group, passing to the eastward of the volcano, where no one of the party had ever been; and the other was to follow the eastern margin of the bay, keeping inside of it, and trusting to find some opening by which the schooner could force her way into clear water to the northward. After a very brief consultation with his mates, Roswell decided on attempting the last.

As the course now to be steered was almost dead before the wind, the little craft, lightened of so much of her upper works, almost flew through the water. The great source of apprehension felt by our young men in attempting this new expedient was in the probability that the field would drift home to the rocks in the northeast quarter of the bay, which, with a southwest wind, was necessarily a quarter to leeward. Should this prove to be the case, it might be found impossible to pass ahead, and the schooner would be caught in a *cul de sac;* since it would not be in the power of her people to track her back again in the teeth of so strong a wind. Notwithstanding these probabilities, on Roswell went; for he saw plain enough that at such a moment almost anything was better than indecision.

The rate at which the little craft was flying before a fresh gale, in perfectly

smooth water, soon put our sealers in a better condition to form closer estimates of their chances. The lookouts aloft, one of whom was Hazard, the first officer, sent down on deck constant reports of what they could see.

"How does it look ahead now, Mr. Hazard?" demanded Roswell, about five in the afternoon, just as his schooner was coming close under the smoking sides of the volcano, which had always been an object of interest to him, though he had never found time to visit it before. "Is there no danger of our touching the ground, close in as we are to this island?"

"I think not, sir; when I landed here, we kept the lead going the whole time, and we got two fathoms quite up to the shore. In my judgment, Captain Gar'ner, we may run down along this land as bold as lions."

"And how does it look ahead? I've no wish to get jammed here, close aboard of a volcano, which may be choking us all with its smoke before we know where we are."

"Not much danger of that, sir, with this wind. These volcanoes are nothin' but playthings, a'ter all. The vapor is driving off toward the northeast—That was a crack, with a vengeance!"

Just as Hazard was boasting of the innocuous character of a volcano, that near them fired a gun, as the men afterward called it, casting into the air a large flight of cinders and stones, accompanied by a sharp flash of flame. All the lighter materials drove away to leeward, but the heavier followed the laws of projectiles, and scattered in all directions. Several stones of some size fell quite close to the schooner, and a few smaller actually came down on her decks.

"It will never do to stop here to boil our pot," cried Roswell to the mate. "We must get away from this, Mr. Hazard, as fast as the good craft can travel!"

"Get away it is, sir. There is nothing very near ahead to stop us; though it does look more toward the east cape as if the field was jammed in that quarter."

"Keep all your eyes about you, sir; and look out especially for any opening among the smaller islands ahead. I am not without hope that the currents which run among them may give us a clear passage in that quarter."

These words explain precisely that which did actually occur. On went the schooner, almost brushing the base of the volcano, causing Roswell many a bound of the heart, when he fancied she must strike; but she went clear. All this time it was crack, crack, crack, from the crater, rumbling sounds and heavy explosions; the last attended by flames, and smoke of a pitchy darkness. A dozen times the *Sea Lion* had very narrow escapes when nearer to the danger, stones of a weight to pass through her decks and bottom falling even on the ice outside of her; but that Hand which had so benevolently stayed various other evils, was stretched forth to save, and nothing touched the schooner of a size to do any injury. These escapes made a deep impression on Roswell. Until the past winter he had been accustomed to look upon things and events as matters of course. This vacant indifference, so common to men in prosperity, was extended even to the sublimest exhibition of the Almighty power; our hero seeing nothing in the firmament of heaven, of a clear night, but the twinkling lights that seemed to him to be placed there merely to garnish and illumine the darkness of this globe. Now, how differently did he look upon natural objects, and their origin! If it were only an insect, his mind presented its wonderful mechanism, its beauty, its uses. No star seemed less than what science has taught us that it is; and the power of the Dread Being who had created all, who governed all, and who was judge of all, became an inseparable subject of contemplation, as he looked upon the least of his works. Feelings thus softened and tempered by humility, easily led their subject to the reception of those leading articles of the Christian faith which have been consecrated by the belief of the Church catholic since the ages of miraculous guidance, and which are now venerable by time. Bold and presuming is he who fan-

cies that his intellect can rectify errors of this magnitude and antiquity, and that the Church of God has been permitted to wallow on in a most fatal idolatry for centuries, to be extricated by the pretending syllogisms of his one-sided and narrow philosophy!

The people of the *Sea Lion* were less affected by what they saw than their young commander. Their hearts were light with the prospect of a speedy release from the hardships and dangers they had undergone; and, at each explosion of the volcano, as soon as out of reach of the falling stones, they laughed, and asserted that the mountain was firing a salute in honor of their departure. Such is the difference between men whose hearts and spirits have submitted to the law of faith, and those who live on in the recklessness of the passing events of life.

The schooner was racing past a rocky islet, beginning to haul more on a wind, as she made the circuit of the bay, just as Hazard came to the conclusion that the field had drifted home on the outer island of the group, and that it would be impossible to pass into clear water by going on. Turning his head in quest of some bay, or other secure place in which the craft might wait for a favorable change, he saw a narrow opening to leeward of the islet he had passed but a minute before, and, so far as he could perceive, one that led directly out to sea.

It was too late to keep away for the entrance of the passage, the ice being too close at hand to leeward; but, most fortunately, there was room to tack. A call to Roswell soon caused the schooner to be close on a wind; down went her helm, and round she came like a top. Sail was shortened in stays, and by the time the little craft was ready to fall off for the passage, she had nothing on her but a fore-topsail, jib, and a close-reefed mainsail. Under this canvas she glided along, almost brushing the rocks of the islet, but without touching. In twenty minutes more she was clear of the group altogether, and in open water.

That night some embarrassment was encountered from broken field-ice, of which the ocean was pretty full; but by exercising great vigilance, no serious thump occurred. Fortunately the period of darkness was quite short, the twilight being of great length, both mornings and evenings; and the reappearence of the sun cast a cheerful glow on the face of the troubled waters.

The wind held at southwest for three days, blowing heavily the whole time. By the second night-fall the sea was clear of ice, and everything was carried on the schooner that she could bear. About nine o'clock on the morning of the fourth day out, a speck was seen rising above the ragged outline of the rolling waves: and each minute it became higher and more distinct. An hour or two later, the *Sea Lion* was staggering along before a westerly gale, with the Hermit of Cape Horn on her larboard beam, distant three leagues. How many trying scenes and bitter moments crowded on the mind of young Roswell Gardiner as he recalled all that had passed in the ten months which intervened since he had come out from behind the shelter of those wild rocks! Stormy as was that sea, and terrible as was its name among mariners, coming, as he did, from one still more stormy and terrible, he now regarded it as a sort of place of refuge. A winter there he well knew would be no trifling undertaking; but he had just passed a winter in a region where even fuel was not to be found, unless carried there.

Twenty days later the *Sea Lion* sailed again from Rio, having sold all the sea-elephant oil that remained, and bought stores; of which, by this time, the vessel was much in want. Most of the portions of the provisions that were left had been damaged by the thawing process; and food was getting to be absolutely necessary to her people, when the schooner went again into the noble harbor of the capital of Brazil. Then succeeded the lassitude and calms that reign about the imaginary line that marks the circuit of the earth, at that point which is ever central as regards the sun, and where the days and nights are always equal. No inclination of the earth's axis to the plane

of its orbit affected the climate there, which knew not the distinctions of summer and winter; or which, if they exist at all, were so faintly marked as to be nearly imperceptible.

Twenty days later the schooner was standing among some low sandy keys under short canvas, and in the southeast trades. By her movements, an anchorage was sought; and one was found at last, where the craft was brought up, boats were hoisted out, and Roswell Gardiner landed.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond."
—SHAKESPEARE.

THE earth had not stopped in its swift race around the sun at Oyster Pond, while all these events were in the course of occurrence in the antarctic seas. The summer had passed, that summer which was to have brought back the sealers; and autumn had come to chill the hopes as well as the body. Winter did not bring any change. Nothing was heard of Roswell and his companions, nor *could* anything have been heard of them short of the intervention of a miracle.

Mary Pratt no longer mentioned Roswell in her prayers. She fully believed him to be dead; and her puritanical creed taught her that this, the sweetest and most endearing of all the rites of Christianity, was allied to a belief that it was sacrilege to entertain. We pretend not to any distinct impressions on this subject ourselves, beyond a sturdy Protestant disinclination to put any faith in the abuses of purgatory at least; but most devoutly do we wish that such petitions *could* have the efficacy that so large a portion of the Christian world impute to them. But Mary Pratt, so much better than we can lay any claim to be in all essentials, was less liberal than ourselves on this great point of doctrine. Roswell Gardiner's name now never passed her lips in prayer, therefore, though scarce a minute went by without his manly person being present to her imagination. He still lived in her heart, a shrine from which she made no effort to expel him.

As for the deacon, age, disease, and distress of mind had brought him to his last hours. The passions which had so engrossed him when in health, now turned upon his nature, and preyed upon his vitals, like an ill-omened bird. It is more than probable that he would have lived some months, possibly some years longer, had not the evil spirit of covetousness conspired to heighten the malady that wasted his physical frame. As it was, the sands of life were running low; and the skillful Doctor Sage, himself, had admitted to Mary the improbability that her uncle and protector could long survive.

It is wonderful how the interest in a rich man suddenly revives among his relatives and possibly heirs, as his last hour draws near. Deacon Pratt was known to be wealthy in a small way; was thought to possess his thirty or forty thousand dollars, which was regarded as wealth among the East-enders thirty years since; and every human being in Old Suffolk, whether of its overwhelming majority or of its more select and wiser minority, who could by legal possibility claim any right to be remembered by the dying man, crowded around his bedside. At that moment Mary Pratt, who had so long nursed his diseases and mitigated his sufferings, was compelled to appear as a very insignificant and secondary person. Others who stood in the same degree of consanguinity to the dying man, and two, a brother and sister, who were even one degree closer, had *their* claims, and were by no means disposed to suffer them to be forgotten.

Gladly would poor Mary have prayed by her uncle's bedside; but Parson Whittle had assumed this solemn duty, it being deemed proper that one who had so long filled the office of deacon should depart with a proper attention to the usages of his meeting. Some of the relatives who had lately appeared, and who were not so conversant with the state of things between the deacon and his divine, com-

plained among themselves that the latter made too many ill-timed allusions to the pecuniary wants of the congregation; and that he had, in particular, almost as much as asked the deacon to make a legacy that would enable those who were to stay behind to paint the meeting-house, erect a new horse-shed, purchase some improved stoves, and reseat the body of the building. These modest requests, it was whispered—for all passed in whispers then—would consume not less than a thousand dollars of the deacon's hard earnings; and the thing was mentioned as a wrong done him who was about to descend into the grave, where naught of earth could avail him in any way.

Close was the siege that was laid to Deacon Pratt during the last week of his life. Many were the hints given of the necessity of his making a will, though the brother and sister, estimating their rights as the law established them, said but little on the subject, and that little was rather against the propriety of annoying a man, in their brother's condition, with business of so perplexing a nature. The fact that these important personages set their faces against the scheme had due weight, and most of the relatives began to calculate the probable amount of their respective shares under the law of distribution as it stood in that day. This excellent and surpassingly wise community of New York had not then reached the pass of exceeding liberality toward which it is now so rapidly tending. In that day, the debtor was not yet thought of as the creditor's next heir, and that plausible and impracticable desire of a false philanthropy, which is termed the Homestead Exemption Law—impracticable as to anything like a just and equitable exemption of equal amount in all cases of indebtedness—was not yet dreamed of. New York was then a sound and healthful community; making its mistakes, doubtless, as men ever will err; but the control of things had not yet passed into the hands of sheer political empirics, whose ignorance and quackery were stimulated by the lowest passion for majorities. Among other things that were then respected were wills; but it was not known to a single individual among all those who thronged the dwelling of Deacon Pratt, that the dying man had ever mustered the self-command necessary to make such an instrument. He was free to act, but did not choose to avail himself of his freedom. Had he survived a few years, he would have found himself in the enjoyment of a liberty so sublimated, that he could not lease, or rent a farm, or collect a common debt, without coming under the harrow of the tiller of the political soil.

The season had advanced to the early part of April, and that is usually a soft and balmy month on the seashore, though liable to considerable and sudden changes of temperature. On the day on which we now desire to transfer the scene, the windows of the deacon's bedroom were open, and the soft south wind fanned his hollow and pallid cheek. Death was near, though the principle of life struggled hard with the King of Terrors. It was now that that bewildered and Pharisaical faith which had so long held this professor of religion in a bondage even more oppressive than open and announced sins, most felt the insufficiency of the creed in which he had rather been speculating than trusting all his life, to render the passing hour composed and secure. There had always been too much of self in Deacon Pratt's moral temperament to render his belief as humble and devout as it should be. It availed him not a hair, now that he was a deacon, or that he had made long prayers in the market-places, where men could see him, or that he had done so much, as he was wont to proclaim, for example's sake. All had not sufficed to cleanse his heart of worldly-mindedness, and he now groped about him, in the darkness of a faith obscured, for the true light that was to illumine his path to another world.

The doctor had ordered the room cleared of all but two or three of the dying man's nearest relatives. Among these last, however, was the gentle and tender-hearted Mary, who loved to be near her uncle in this his greatest need. She no longer thought of his covetousness, of his griping usury, of his living so much for

self and so little for God. While hovering about the bed, a message reached her that Baiting Joe wished to see her in the passage that led to the bedroom. She went to this old fisherman and found him standing near a window that looked toward the east, and which consequently faced the waters of Gardiner's Bay.

"There she is, Miss Mary," said Joe, pointing out of the window, his whole face in a glow between joy and whisky. "It should be told to the deacon at once, that his last hours might be happier than some that he has passed lately. That's she—though at first I did not know her."

Mary saw a vessel standing in toward Oyster Pond, and her familiarity with objects of that nature was such as to tell her at once that it was a schooner; but so completely had she given up the *Sea Lion* that it did not occur to her that this could be the long-missing craft.

"At what are you pointing, Joe?" the wondering girl asked, with perfect innocence.

"At that craft—at the *Sea Lion* of Sterling, which has been so long set down as missing, but which has turned up just as her owner is about to cast off from this 'arth altogether."

Joe might have talked for an hour: he did chatter away for two or three minutes, with his head and half his body out of the window, uninterrupted by Mary, who sank into a chair to prevent falling on the floor. At length the dear girl commanded herself, and spoke.

"You cannot possibly be certain, Joe," she said; "that schooner does not look, to me, like the *Sea Lion*."

"Nor to me, in some things, while in other some she does. Her upper works seem strangely out of shape, and there's precious little on 'em. But no other foretaw-sail schooner ever comes in this-a-way, and I know of none likely to do it. Ay, by Jupiter, there goes the very blue peter I helped to make with my own hands, and it was agreed to set it as the deacon's signal. There's no mistake now!"

Joe might have talked half an hour longer without any fear of interruption, for Mary had vanished to her own room, leaving him with his body and head still out of the window, making his strictures and conjectures for some time longer; while the person to whom he fancied he was speaking, was, in truth, on her knees, rendering thanks to God! An hour later all doubts were removed, the schooner coming in between Oyster Pond and Shelter Island, and making the best of her way to the well-known wharf.

"Isn't it wonderful, Mary," exclaimed the deacon in a hollow voice, it is true, but with an animation and force that did not appear to have any immediate connection with death—"isn't it wonderful that Gar'ner should come back, a'ter all! If he has only done his duty by me, this will be the greatest ventur' of my whole life; it will make the evening of my days comfortable. I hope I've always been grateful for blessings, and I'm sure I'm grateful, from the bottom of my heart, for this. Give me prosperity and I'm not apt to forget it. They've been asking me to make a will, but I told 'em I was too poor to think of any such thing; and, now my schooner has got back, I s'pose I shall get more hints of the same sort. Should anything happen to me, Mary, you can bring out the sealed paper I gave you to keep, and that must satisfy 'em all. You'll remember it is addressed to Gar'ner. There isn't much in it, and it won't be much thought of, I fancy; but, such as it is, 'tis the last instrument I sign, unless I get better. To think of Gar'ner's coming back, a'ter all! It has put new life in me, and I shall be about ag'in in a week if he has only not forgotten the key and the hidden treasure!"

Mary Pratt's heart had not been so light for many a weary day, but it grieved her to be a witness of this lingering longing after the things of the world. She knew that not only her uncle's days, but his very hours, were numbered; and that notwithstanding this momentary flickering of the lamp, in consequence of fresh oil being poured into it, the wick was nearly consumed, and that it must shortly go out, let Roswell's success be what it might. The news of the sudden and un-

looked-for return of a vessel so long believed to be lost spread like wildfire over the whole Point, and greatly did it increase the interest of the relatives in the condition of the dying man. If he was a subject of great concern before, doubly did he become so now. A vessel freighted with furs would have caused much excitement of itself; but, by some means or other, the deacon's great secret of the buried treasure had leaked out, most probably by means of some of his lamentations during his illness, and, though but imperfectly known, it added largely to the expectations connected with the unlooked-for return of the schooner. In short, it would not have been easy to devise a circumstance that should serve to increase the liveliness of feeling that just then prevailed on the subject of Deacon Pratt and his assets, than the arrival of the *Sea Lion* at that precise moment.

And arrive she did, that tempest-tossed, crippled, ice-bound, and half-burned little craft, after roaming over an extent of ocean that would have made up half-a-dozen ordinary sea voyages. In was, in truth, the schooner so well known to the reader, that was now settling away her mainsail and jib, as she kept off, under her fore-topsail alone, toward the wharf, on which every human being who could, with any show of propriety, be there at such a moment, was now collected, in a curious and excited crowd. Altogether, including boys and females, there must have been not less than a hundred persons on that wharf; and among them were most of the anxious relatives who were in attendance on the vessel's owner, in his last hours. By a transition that was natural enough, perhaps, under the circumstances, they had transferred their interest in the deacon to this schooner, which they looked upon as an inanimate portion of an investment that would soon have little that was animate about it.

Baiting Joe was a sort of oracle, in such circumstances. He had passed his youth at sea, having often doubled the Horn, and was known to possess a very respectable amount of knowledge on the subject of vessels of all sorts and sizes, rig and qualities. He was now consulted by all who could get near him, as a matter of course, and his opinions were received as *res adjudicata*, as the lawyers have it.

"That's the boat," said Joe, affecting to call the *Sea Lion* by a diminutive, as a proof of regard; "yes, that's the craft, herself; but she is wonderfully deep in the water! I never seed a schooner of her tonnage, come in from a v'y'ge, with her scuppers so near a-wash. Don't you think, Jim, there must be suthin' heavier than skins in her hold, to bring her down so low in the water?"

Jim was another loafer, who lived by taking clams, oysters, fish, and the other treasures of the surrounding bays. He was by no means as high authority as Baiting Joe; still he was always authority on a wharf.

"I never seed the like on't," answered Jim. "That schooner must ha' made most of her passage under water. She's as deep as one of our coasters comin' in with a load of brick!"

"She's deep; but not as deep as a craft I once made a cruise in. I was aboard of the first of Uncle Sam's gunboats that crossed the pond to Gibraltar. When we got in, it made the Mediterranean stare, I can tell you! We had furrin officers aboard us, the whull time, lookin' about, and wonderin', as they called it, if we wasn't amphibbies."

"What's that?" demanded Jim, rather hastily. "There's no sich rope in the ship."

"I know that well enough; but an amphibby, as I understand it, is a new sort of whale, that comes up to breathe, like all of that family, as old Dr. Mitchell, of Cow Neck, calls the critturs. So the furrin officers thought we must be of the amphibby family, to live so much under water, as it seemed to them. It was wet work, I can tell you, boys; I don't think I got a good breath more than once an hour, the whull of the first day we was out. One of the furrin officers asked our captain how the gunboat steered. He wasn't a captain at all—only a master, you see, and we all called him Jumpin'

Billy. So Jumpin' Billy says, 'Don't know, sir.' 'What! crossed the Atlantic in her, and don't know how your craft steers!' says the furrin officer, says he—and well he might, Jim, since nothin' that ever lived could go from Norfolk to Gibralter without *some* attention to the helm—but Jumpin' Billy had another story to tell. 'No, sir; don't know,' he answered. 'You see, sir, a nor-wester took us right aft, as we cleared the capes, and down she dove, with her nose under and her starn out, and she came across without having a chance to try the rudder.'"

This story, which Joe had told at least a hundred times before, and which, by the way, is said to be true, produced the usual admiration, especially among the crowd of legatees-expectant, to most of whom it was quite new. When the laugh went out, which it soon did of itself, Joe pursued a subject that was of more interest to most of his auditors, or rather to the principal personages among them.

"Skins never brought a craft so low, that you may be sartin of!" he resumed. "I've seed all sorts of vessels stowed, but a hundred press-screws couldn't cram in furs enough to bring a craft so low! To my eye, Jim, there's suthin' unnat'ral about that schooner, a'ter all."

The study is scarce worthy of a diploma, but we will take this occasion to say, for the benefit of certain foreign writers, principally of the female sex, who fancy they represent Americanisms, that the vulgar of the great republic, and it is admitted there are enough of the class, never say "summat" or "somethink," which are low English, but not low American, dialect. The in-and-in Yankee says "suth-in." In a hundred other words have these ambitious ladies done injustice to our vulgar, who are not vulgar, according to the laws of Cockayne, in the smallest degree. "*The* Broadway," for instance, is no more used by an American than "*the* Congress," or "the United States of *North* America."

"Perhaps," answered Jim, "'tisn't the *Sea Lion*, a'ter all. There's a family look about all the craft some men build, and this may be a sort of relation of our missin' schooner."

"I'll not answer for the craft, though that's her blue peter and them's her mast-heads, and I turned in that taw-sail halyard-block with my own hands. I'll tell you what, Jim, there's been a wrack, or a nip, up yonder, among the ice, and this schooner has been built anew out of that there schooner. You see if it don't turn out as I tell you. Ay, and there's Captain Gar'ner himself, alive and well, just comin' forrard."

A little girl started with this news, and was soon pouring it into the willing ears and open heart of the weeping and grateful Mary. An hour later, Roswell held the latter in his arms; for at such a moment it was not possible for the most scrupulous of the sex to affect coldness and reserve, where there was so much real tenderness and love. While folding Mary to his heart, Roswell whispered in her ears the blessed words that announced his own humble submission to the faith which accepted Christ as the Son of God. Too well did the gentle and ingenuous girl understand the sincerity and frankness of her lover's nature to doubt what he said, or in any manner to distrust the motive. That moment was the happiest of her short and innocent life!

But the welcome tidings had reached the deacon, and ere Roswell had an opportunity of making any other explanations but those which assured Mary that he had come back all that she wished him to be, both of them were summoned to the bedside of the dying man. The effect of the excitement on the deacon was so very great as almost to persuade the expectant legatees that their visit was premature, and that they might return home, to renew it at some future day. It is painful to find it our duty to draw sketches that shall contain such pictures of human nature; but with what justice could we represent the loathsome likeness of covetousness, hovering over a grave, and omit the resemblances of those who surrounded it? Mary Pratt, alone, of all that extensive family connection, felt and thought as Christianity, and womanly affection,

and reason, dictated. All the rest saw nothing but the possessor of a considerable property, who was about to depart for that unknown world, into which nothing could be taken from this, but the divine and abused spirit which had been fashioned in the likeness of God.

"Welcome, Gar'ner—welcome home, ag'in!" exclaimed the deacon, so heartily as quite to deceive the young man as to the real condition of his owner; a mistake that was, perhaps, a little unfortunate, as it induced him to be more frank than might otherwise have been the case. "I couldn't find it in my heart to give you up, and have all along believed that we should yet have good news from you. The Gar'ners are a reliable family, and that was one reason why I chose you to command my schooner. Them Daggetts are a torment, but we never should have known anything about the islands, or the key, hadn't it been for one on 'em."

As the deacon stopped for breath, Mary turned away from the bed, grieved at heart to see the longings of the world thus clinging to the spirit of one who probably had not another hour to live. The glazed but animated eye, a cheek which resembled a faded leaf of the maple laid on a cold and whitish stone, and lips that had already begun to recede from the teeth, made a sad, sad picture, truly, to look upon at such a moment; yet, of all present, Mary Pratt alone felt the fullness of the incongruity, and alone bethought her of the unreasonableness of encouraging feelings like those which were now uppermost in the deacon's breast. Even Minister Whittle had a curiosity to know how much was added to the sum total of Deacon Pratt's assets by the return of a craft that had so long been set down among the missing. When all eyes, therefore, were turned in curiosity on the handsome face of the fine manly youth who now stood at the bedside of the deacon, including those of brother and sister, of nephews and nieces, of cousins and friends, those of this servant of the most high God were of the number, and not the least expressive of solicitude and expectation. As soon as the deacon had caught a little breath, and had swallowed a restorative that the hired nurse had handed to him, his eager thoughts reverted to the one engrossing theme of his whole life.

"These are all friends, Gar'ner," he said; "come to visit me in a little sickness that I've been somewhat subject to of late, and who will all be glad to hear of our good fortune. So you've brought the schooner back, a'ter all, Gar'ner, and will disapp'int the Sag Harbor shipowners, who have been all along foretelling that we should never see her ag'in:—brought her back—ha! Gar'ner?"

"Only in part, Deacon Pratt. We have had good luck and bad luck since we left you, and have only brought home the best part of the craft."

"The best part!" said the deacon, gulping his words in a way that compelled him to pause; "the best part! What, in the name of property, has become of the rest?"

"The rest was burned, sir, to keep us from freezing to death." Roswell then gave a brief but very clear and intelligible account of what had happened, and of the manner in which he had caused the hulk of the deacon's *Sea Lion* to be raised upon by the materials furnished by the *Sea Lion* of the Vineyard. The narrative brought Mary Pratt back to the side of the bed, and caused her calm eyes to become riveted intently on the speaker's face. As for the deacon, he might have said, with Shakespeare's Wolsey:

> "Had I but served my God with half the zeal
> I served my king, he would not, in mine age,
> Have left me naked to mine enemies."

His fall was not that of a loss of power, it is true, but it was that of a still more ignoble passion—covetousness. As Roswell proceeded, his mind represented one source of wealth after another released from his clutch, until it was with a tremulous voice, and a countenance from which all traces of animation had fled, that he ventured again to speak.

"Then I may look upon my ventur' as worse than nothing?" he said. "The insurers will raise a question about paying for a craft that has been rebuilt in this way, and the Vineyard folks will be sar-

tain to put in a claim of salvage, both on account of two of their hands helping you with the work, and on account of the materials—and we with no cargo, as an offset to it all!"

"No, deacon, it is not quite so bad as that," resumed Roswell. "We have brought home a good lot of skins; enough to pay the people full wages, and to return you every cent of outfit, with a handsome advance on the venture. A sealer usually makes a good business of it, if she falls in with seals. Our cargo in skins can't be worth less than $20,000; besides half a freight left on the island, for which another craft may be sent."

"That is suthin', the Lord be praised!" ejaculated the deacon. "Though the schooner is as bad as gone, and the outlays have been awfully heavy; I'm almost afraid to go any further. Gar'ner—did you—I grow weak very fast—did you stop—Mary, I wish *you* would put the question."

"I am afraid that my uncle means to ask if you stopped at the key, in the West Indies, according to your instructions, Roswell?" the niece said, and most reluctantly; for she plainly saw it was fully time her uncle ceased to think of the things of this life, and to begin to turn all his thoughts on the blessed mediation, and another state of being.

"I forgot no part of your orders, sir," rejoined Roswell. "It was my duty to obey them, and I believe I have done so to the letter——"

"Stop, Gar'ner," interrupted the dying man—"one question, while I think of it. Will the Vineyard men have any claim of salvage on account of them skins?"

"Certainly not, sir. These skins are all our own—were taken, cured, stowed, and brought home altogether by ourselves. There is a lot of skins belonging to the Vineyarders stowed away in the house, which is yours, deacon, and which it would well pay any small craft to go and bring away. If anybody is to claim salvage, it will be ourselves. No salvage was demanded for the loss off Cape Henlopen, I trust?"

"No, none—Daggett behaved what I call *liberal* in that affair,"—half the critics of the day would use the adjective instead of the adverb here, and why should Deacon Pratt's English be any better than his neighbors?—"and so I have admitted to his friends over on the Vineyard. But, Gar'ner, our great affair still remains to be accounted for. Do you wish to have the room cleared before you speak of that—shall we turn the *key* on all these folks, and then settle accounts?—he! he! he!"

The deacon's facetiousness sounded strangely out of place to Roswell; still, he did not exactly know how to gainsay his wishes. There might be an indiscretion in pursuing his narrative before so many witnesses, and the young man paused until the room was cleared, leaving no one in it but the sick man, Mary, himself, and the nurse. The last could not well be gotten rid of on Oyster Pond, where her office gave her an assumed right to know all family secrets; or, what was the same thing to her, to *fancy* that she knew them. Among all the sayings which the experience of mankind has reduced to axioms, there is not one more just than that which says, "There are secrets in all families." These secrets the world commonly affects to know all about; but we think few will have reached the age of threescore without becoming convinced of how much pretending ignorance there is in this assumption of the world. "*Tot ou tard tout se scait,*" is a significant saying of our old friends, the French, who know as much of things in practice as any other people on the face of the earth; "*tot ou tard tout ne se scait pas.*"

"Is the door shut?" asked the deacon, tremulously, for eagerness united to debility was sadly skaking his whole frame. "See that the door is shut tight, Mary; this is our own secret, and nurse must remember that."

Mary assured him that they were alone, and turned away in sorrow from the bed.

"Now, Gar'ner," resumed the deacon, "open your whole heart, and let us know all about it."

Roswell hesitated to reply; for he, too,

was shocked at witnessing this instance of a soul's clinging to mammon when on the very eve of departing for the unknown world. There was a look in the glazed and sunken eyes of the old man that reminded him unpleasantly of that snapping of the eyes which he had so often seen in Daggett.

"You didn't forget the key, surely, Gar'ner?" asked the deacon, anxiously.

"No, sir; we did our whole duty by that part of the voyage."

"Did you find it—was the place accurately described?"

"No chart could have made it better. We lost a month in looking for the principal landmark, which had been altered by the weather; but that once found, the rest was easy. The difficulty we met with in starting has brought us home so late in the spring."

"Never mind the spring, Gar'ner; the part that is past is sartin to come round ag'in, in due time. And so you found the very key that was described by Daggett?"

"We did, sir; and just where he described it to be."

"And how about the tree, and the little hillock of sand at its foot?"

"Both were there, deacon. The hillock must have grown a good deal, by reason of the shifting sand; but, all things considered, the place was well enough described.

"Well—well—well—you opened the hillock, of course?"

"We did, sir; and found the box mentioned by the pirate."

"A good large box, I'll warrant ye! Them pirates seldom do things by halves—he! he! he!"

"I can't say much for the size of the box, deacon—it looked to me as if it had once held window-glass, and that of rather small dimensions."

"But, the contents—you do not mention the contents."

"They are here, sir," taking a small bag from his pocket, and laying it on the bed, by the deacon's side. "The pieces are all of gold, and there are just one hundred and forty-three of them.—Heavy doubloons, it is true, and I dare say well worth their sixteen dollars each."

The deacon gave a gulp, as if gasping for breath, at the same time that he clutched the bag. The next instant he was dead; and there is much reason to believe that the demons who had watched him, and encouraged him in his besetting sin, laughed at the consummation of their malignant arts! If angels in heaven did not mourn at this characteristic departure of a frail spirit from its earthly tenement, one who had many of their qualities did. Heavy had been the load on Mary Pratt's heart, at the previous display of her uncle's weakness, and profound was how her grief at his having made such an end.

CHAPTER XXX.

"*4th Cit.*—We'll hear the will: Read it, Mark Antony.

Cit.—The will, the will; we will hear Cæsar's will.

Ant.—Have patience, gentle friends, I must not read it;

It is not meet you know how Cæsar loved you."

—JULIUS CÆSAR.

THERE is usually great haste, in this country, in getting rid of the dead. In no other part of the world, with which we are acquainted, are funerals so simple, or so touching; placing the judgment and sins which lead to it, in a far more conspicuous light than rank, or riches, or personal merits. Scarfs and gloves are given in town, and gloves in the country, though scarfs are rare; but, beyond these, and the pall, and the hearse, and the weeping friends, an American funeral is a very unpretending procession of persons in their best attire; on foot when the distance is short; in carriages, in wagons, and on horseback, when the grave is far from the dwelling. There is, however, one feature connected with a death in this country, that we could gladly see altered. It is the almost indecent haste, which so generally prevails, to get rid of the dead. Doubtless the climate has had an effect in establishing this custom: but the climate, in no means, exacts the precipitancy that is usually practiced.

As there were so many friends from a distance present, some of whom took the control of affairs, Mary shrinking back into herself, with a timidity natural to her sex and years, the moment her care could no longer serve her uncle, the funeral of the deacon took place the day after that of his death. It was the solemn and simple ceremony of the country. The Rev. Mr. Whittle conceived that he ought to preach a sermon on the occasion of the extinguishment of this "bright and shining light," and the body was carried to the meeting-house, where the whole congregation assembled, it being the Sabbath. We cannot say much for the discourse, which had already served as eulogiums on two or three other deacons, with a simple substitution of names. In few things are the credulous more imposed on than in this article of sermons. A clergyman shall preach the workings of other men's brains for years, and not one of his hearers detect the imposition, purely on account of the confiding credit it is customary to yield to the pulpit. In this respect, preaching is very much like reviewing—the listener, or the reader, being too complaisant too see through the great standing mystifications of either. Yet preaching is a work of high importance to men, and one that doubtless accomplishes great good, more especially when the life of the preacher corresponds with his doctrine; and even reviewing, though infinitely of less moment, might be made a very useful art, in the hands of upright, independent, intelligent, and learned men. But nothing in this world is as it should be, and centuries will probably roll over it ere the "good time" shall really come!

The day of the funeral being the Sabbath, nothing that touched on business was referred to. On the following morning, however, "the friends" assembled early in the parlor, and an excuse for being a little pressing was made, on the ground that so many present had so far to go. The deacon had probably made a remove much more distant than any that awaited his relatives.

"It is right to look a little into the deacon's matters before we separate," said Mr. Job Pratt, who, if he had the name, had not the patience of him of old, "in order to save trouble and hard feelings. Among relatives and friends there should be nothing but confidence and affection, and I am sure I have no other sentiments toward any here. I suppose"—all Mr. Job Pratt knew, was ever on a supposition—"I suppose I am the proper person to administer to the deacon's property, though I don't wish to do it, if there's the least objection."

Every one assented that he was the most proper person, for all knew he was the individual the surrogate would be the most likely to appoint.

"I have never set down the deacon's property as anything like what common report makes it," resumed Mr. Job Pratt; "though I do suppose it will fully reach ten thousand dollars."

"La!" exclaimed a female cousin, and a widow, who had expectations of her own, "I'd always thought Deacon Pratt worth forty or fifty thousand dollars! Ten thousand dollars won't make much for each for us, divided up among so many folks!"

"The division will not be so very great, Mrs. Martin," returned Mr. Job, "as it will be confined to the next of kin and their representatives. Unless a will should be found—and, by all I can learn, there is *none*"—emphasizing the last word with point—"unless a will be found, the whole estate, real and personal, must be divided into just five shares, which, accordin' to my calculation, would make about two thousand dollars a share. No great fortin', to be sure, though a comfortable addition to small means. The deacon was cluss (Anglicé, close); yes, he was cluss—all the Pratts are a little given to be cluss; but I don't know that they are any the worse for it. It is well to be curful (careful) of one's means, which are a trust given to us by Divine Providence."

In this manner did Mr. Job Pratt often quiet his conscience for being as "curful" of his own as of other person's assets. Divine Providence, according to his morality, made it as much a duty to transfer

the dollar that was in his neighbor's pocket to his own, as to watch it vigilantly after the transposition had been effected.

"A body should be curful, as you say, sir," returned the Widow Martin; "and for that reason I should like to know if there isn't a will. I *know* the deacon set store by me, and I can hardly think he has departed for another world without bethinking him of his cousin Jenny, and of her widowhood."

"I'm afraid he has, Mrs. Martin—really afraid he has. I can hear of no will. The doctor says he doubts if the deacon could ever muster courage to write anything about his own death, and that he has never heard of any will. I understand Mary that she has no knowledge of any will, and I do not know where else to turn in order to inquire. Rev. Mr. Whittle thinks there *is* a will, I ought to say."

"There *must* be a will," returned the parson, who was on the ground again early, and on this very errand; "I feel certain of that from the many conversations I have held with the deceased. It is not a month since I spoke to him of divers repairs that were necessary to each and all of the parish buildings, including the parsonage. He agreed to every word I said—admitted that we could not get on another winter without a new horse-shed; and that the east end of the parsonage ought to be shingled this coming summer."

"All of which may be very true, parson, without the deacon's making a will," quietly, and we may now add *patiently*, observed Mr. Job.

"I don't think so," returned the minister, with a warmth that might have been deemed indiscreet, did it not relate to the horse-shed, the parsonage, and the meeting-house, all of which were public property, rather than to anything in which he had a more direct legal interest. "A pious member of the church would hardly hold out the hopes that Deacon Pratt has held out to me for more than two years, without meaning to make his words good in the end. I think all will agree with me in that opinion."

"Did the deacon, then, go so far as to promise to do anything?" asked Mr. Job, a little timidly, for he was by no means sure the answer might not be in the affirmative, in which case he anticipated the worst.

"Perhaps not," answered Minister Whittle, too conscientious to tell a downright lie, though sorely tempted so to do. "But a man may promise indirectly as well as directly. When I have a thing much at heart, and converse often about it with a person who can grant all I wish, and that person listens as attentively as I could wish him to do, I regard that as a promise, and, in church matters, one of a very solemn nature."

All the Jesuits in the world do not get their educations at Rome, or acknowledge Ignatius Loyola as the great founder of their order. Some are to be found who have never made a public profession of their faith and zeal, have never assumed the tonsure, or taken the vows.

"That's as folks think," quietly returned Mr. Job Pratt, though he smiled in a manner so significant as to cause Mrs. Martin a new qualm, as she grew more and more apprehensive that the property was, after all, to go by the distribution law. "Some folks think a promise ought to be expressed, while others think it may be understood. The law, I believe, commonly looks for the direct expression of any binding promise; and, in matters of this sort, one made in writing, too, and that under a seal, and before three responsible witnesses."

"I wish a full inquiry might be made, to ascertain if there be no will," put in the minister, anxiously.

"I'm quite willing so to do," returned Mr. Job, whose confidence and moral courage increased each instant. "Quite willing; and am rather anxious for it, if I could only see where to go to inquire."

"Does no one present know of any will made by the deceased?" demanded Minister Whittle, authoritatively.

A dead silence succeeded to the question. Eye met eye, and there was great disappointment among the numerous collaterals present, including all those who did

not come in as next of kin, or as their direct representatives. But the Rev. Mr. Whittle had been too long and too keenly on the scent of a legacy, to be thrown out of the hunt, just as he believed the game was coming in sight.

"It might be well to question each near relative directly," he added. "Mr. Job Pratt, do *you* know nothing of any will?"

"Nothing whatever. At one time I did think the deacon meant to make his testament; but I conclude that he must have changed his mind."

"And you, Mrs. Thomas," turning to the sister—"as next of kin, I make the same inquiry of you?"

"I once talked with brother about it," answered this relative, who was working away in a rocking-chair as if she thought the earth might stop in its orbit, if she herself ceased to keep in motion; "but he gave me no satisfactory answer—that is, nothin' that I call satisfactory. Had he told me he *had* made a will, and given me a full shear (share), I should have been content; or had he told me that he had *not* made a will, and that the law would give me a full shear, I should have been content. I look upon myself as a person easily satisfied."

This was being explicit, and left little more to be obtained from the deacon's beloved and only surviving sister.

"And you, Mary; do you know anything of a will made by your uncle?"

Mary shook her head; but there was no smile on her features, for the scene was unpleasant to her.

"Then no one present knows of any paper that the deacon left specially to be opened after his death?" demanded Rev. Mr. Whittle, putting the general question pretty much at random.

"A paper!" cried Mary, hastily. "Yes, I know something of a *paper*—I thought you spoke of a will."

"A will is commonly written on paper, nowadays, Miss Mary—but, you have a *paper?*"

"Uncle gave me a *paper*, and told me to keep it till Roswell Gardiner came back; and, if he himself should not then be living, to give it to him." The color now mounted to the very temples of the pretty girl, and she seemed to speak with greater deliberation and care. "As I was to give the paper to Roswell, I have always thought it related to him. My uncle spoke of it to me as lately as the day of his death."

"That's the will, beyond a doubt!" cried Rev. Mr. Whittle, with more exultation than became his profession and professions. "Do you not think this may be Deacon Pratt's will, Miss Mary?"

Now Mary had never thought any such thing. She knew that her uncle much wished her to marry Roswell, and had all along fancied that the paper she held, which indeed was contained in an envelope addressed to her lover, contained some expression of his wishes on this to her the most interesting of all subjects, and nothing else. Mary Pratt thought very little of her uncle's property, and still less of its future disposition, while she thought a great deal of Roswell Gardiner and of his suit. It was, consequently, the most natural thing in the world that she should have fallen into some such error as this. But, now that the subject was brought to her mind in this new light, she arose, went to her own room, and soon reappeared with the paper in her hand. Both Mr. Job Pratt and Rev. Mr. Whittle offered to relieve her of the burden; and the former, by a pretty decided movement, did actually succeed in getting possession of the documents. The papers were done up in the form of a large business letter, which was duly sealed with wax, and addressed to "Mr. Roswell Gardiner, Master of the Schooner *Sea Lion*, now absent on a voyage." The superscription was read aloud, a little under the influence of surprise; notwithstanding which, Mr. Job Pratt was very coolly proceeding to open the packet, precisely as if it had been addressed to himself. In this decided step, Mrs. Martin, and Mrs. Thomas, and Rev. Mr. Whittle, might be set down as accessories before the act; for each approached; and so eager were the two women that they actually assisted in breaking the seal.

"If that letter is addressed to me," said Roswell Gardiner, with firmness and

authority, "I claim the right to open it myself. It is unusual for those to whom a letter is *not* addressed to assume this office."

"But, it comes *from* Deacon Pratt," cried the Widow Martin, "and may contain his will."

"In which case, a body would think I have some rights concerned," said Mr. Job Pratt, a little more coolly, but with manifest doubts.

"Sartain!" put in Mrs. Thomas. "Brothers and sisters, and even cousins, come before strangers, any day. Here we are, a brother and sister of the deacon, and we ought to have a right to read his letters."

All this time Roswell had stood with an extended arm, and an eye that caused Mr. Job Pratt to control his impatience. Mary advanced close to his side, as if to sustain him, but she said nothing.

"There is a law, with severe penalties, against knowingly opening a letter addressed to another," resumed Roswell steadily; "and it shall be enforced against any one who shall presume to open one of mine. If that letter has my address, sir, I demand it; and I will have it, at every hazard."

Roswell advanced a step nearer Mr. Job Pratt, and the letter was reluctantly yielded; though not until the Widow Martin had made a nervous but abortive snatch at it.

"At any rate, it ought to be opened in our presence," put in this woman, "that we may see what is in it."

"And by what right, ma'am? Have I not the privilege of others, to read my own letters when and where I please? If the contents of this, however, do really relate to the late Deacon Pratt's property, I am quite willing they should be made known. There is nothing on this superscription to tell me to open the packet in the presence of witnesses; but, under all the circumstances, I prefer it should be done."

Hereupon Roswell proceeded deliberately to look into the package. The seal was already broken, and he exhibited it in that state to all in the room, with a meaning smile, after which he brought to light and opened some written instrument, that was engrossed on a single sheet of foolscap, and had the names of several witnesses at its bottom.

"Ay, ay, that's it," said Baiting Joe, for the room was crowded with all sorts of people; "that's the dockerment. I know'd it as soon as I laid eyes on it!"

"And what do *you* know about it, Josy?" demanded the widow, eagerly. "Cousin Job, this man may turn out a most important and considerable witness!"

"What do I know, Mrs. Martin? Why, I seed the deacon sign for the seals, and execute. As soon as I heard Squire Craft, who was down here from Riverhead on that 'ere very business, talk so much about seals, I know'd Captain Gar'ner must have suthin' to do with the matter. The deacon's very heart was in the schooner and her v'y'ge, and I think it was the craft that finished him, in the end."

"Won't that set aside a codicil, cousin Job, if so be the deacon has r'ally codiciled off Captain Gar'ner and Mary?"

"We shall see, we shall see. So you was present, Josy, at the making of a will?"

"Sartin—and was a witness to the insterment, as the squire called it. I s'pose he sent for me to be a witness as I am some acquainted with the sealin' business, having made two v'y'ges out of Stunnin'-tun, many years since. Ay, ay; that's the insterment, and pretty well frightened was the deacon when he put his name to it, I can tell you!"

"Frightened!" echoed the brother—"that's ag'in law, at any rate. The instrument that a man signs because he's frightened is no instrument at all, in law. As respects a will, it is what we justices of the peace call 'dies non,' or don't die: that is, in law."

"Can that be so, Squire Job?" asked the sister, who had said but little hitherto, but had thought all the more.

"Yes, that's Latin, I s'pose, and good Latin, too, they tell me. A man may be dead in the flesh, but living in law."

"La! how cur'ous! Law is a wonder-

ful thing, to them that understands it."

The worthy Mrs. Thomas expressed a much more profound sentiment than that of which she was probably aware herself. Law *is* a wonderful thing, and most wonderful is he who can tell what it is to-day, or is likely to be to-morrow. The law of testamentary devises, in particular, has more than the usual uncertainty, the great interest that is taken by the community in the large estates of certain individuals who are placed without the ordinary social categories by the magnitude of their fortunes, preventing anything from becoming absolutely settled, as respects *them*. In Turkey, and in America, the possession of great wealth is very apt to ruin their possessors; proscription, in some form or other, being pretty certain to be the consequences. In Turkey, such has long and openly been the fact, the bow-string usually lying at the side of the strong box; but, in this country, the system is in its infancy, though advancing toward maturity with giant strides. Twenty years more, resembling the twenty that are just past, in which the seed recently sown broadcast shall have time to reach maturity, and, in our poor opinion, the great work of demoralization, in this important particular, will be achieved. We are much afraid that the boasted progress, of which we hear so much, will resemble the act of the man who fancied he could teach his horse to live without food—just as he believed the poor beast was perfect, it died of inanition!

Roswell read Baiting Joe's "insterment" twice, and then he placed it, with manly tenderness, in the hands of Mary. The girl read the document, too, tears starting to her eyes; but a bright flush suffused her face, as she returned the will to her lover.

"Ah! do not read it now, Roswell," she said, in an undertone; but the stillness and expectation were so profound, that every syllable she uttered was heard by all in the room.

"And why not read it now, Miss Mary!" cried the Widow Martin. "Methinks *now* is the proper time to read it. If I'm to be codiciled out of that will, I want to know it."

"It is better, in every respect, that the company present should know all that is to be known, at once," observed Mr. Job Pratt. "Before the will is read, if that be the will, Captain Gar'ner——"

"It is the will of the late Deacon Pratt, duly signed, sealed, and witnessed, I believe, sir."

"One word more, then, before it is read. I think you said, Josy, that the deceased was *frightened* when he signed that will? I do not express any opinions until I hear the will; perhaps a'ter it is read, I shall think or say nothin' about this fright; though the instrument that a man signs because he is frightened, if the fright be what I call a legal fright, is no instrument at all."

"But such was not the deacon's case, Squire Job," put in Baiting Joe, at once. "He did not sign the insterment because he was frightened, but was frightened because he signed the insterment. Let the boat go right end foremost, squire."

"Read the will, Captain Gar'ner, if you have it," said Mr. Job Pratt, with decision. "It is proper that we should know who is executor. Friends, will you be silent for a moment?"

Amid a death-like stillness, Roswell Gardiner now read as follows:

"In the name of God, amen. I, Ichabod Pratt, of the town of Southold, and county of Suffolk, and State of New York, being of failing bodily health, but of sound mind, do make and declare this to be my last will and testament.

"I bequeath to my niece, Mary Pratt, only child of my late brother, Israel Pratt, all my real estate, whatsoever it may be and wheresoever situate, to be held by her, her heirs, and assigns, forever, in fee.

"I bequeath to my brother, Job Pratt, any horse of which I shall die possessed, to be chosen by himself, as a compensation for the injury inflicted on a horse of his, while in my use.

"I bequeath to my sister, Jane Thomas, the large looking-glass that is hanging up in the east bedroom of my house, and

which was once the property of our beloved mother.

"I bequeath to the widow Catherine Martin, my cousin, the big pincushion in the said east chamber, which she used so much to praise and admire.

"I bequeath to my said niece, Mary Pratt, the only child of my late brother, Irsael Pratt, aforesaid, all of my personal estate, whether in possession or existing in equity, including money at use, vessels, stock on farm, all other sorts of stock, furniture, wearing apparel, book-debts, money in hand, and all sorts of personal property whatever.

"I nominate and appoint Roswell Gardiner, now absent on a sealing voyage, in my employment, as the sole executor of this my last will, provided he return home within six months of my decease; and should he not return home within the said six months, then I appoint my abovementioned niece and heiress, Mary Pratt, the sole executrix of this my will.

"I earnestly advise my said niece, Mary Pratt, to marry the said Roswell Gardiner; but I annex no conditions whatever to this advice, wishing to leave my adopted daughter free to do as she may think best."

The instrument was, in all respects, duly executed, and there could not be a doubt of its entire validity. Mary felt a little bewildered, as well as greatly embarrassed. So perfectly disinterested had been all her care of her uncle, and so humble her wishes, that she did not for some time regard herself as the owner of a property that she had all her life been accustomed to consider as a part of her late uncle. The heirs expectant, "a'ter reading the insterment," as Baiting Joe told his cronies, when he related the circumstances over a mug of cider that evening, "fore and aft, and overhauling it from truck to keelson, give the matter up, as a bad job. They couldn't make nawthin' out of oppersition," continued Joe, "and so they took the horse, and the looking-glass, and the pincushion, and cleared out with their cargo. You couldn't get one of that breed to leave as much as a pin behind, to which he thought the law would give him a right. Squire Job went off very unwillingly; for so strong was his belief in his claim, that he made up his mind, as he told me himself, to break up the north meadow, and put it in corn this coming season."

"They say that Minister Whittle took it very hard that nawthin' was said about him, or about meetin', in the deacon's will," observed Jake Davis, one of Baiting Joe's cronies.

"That he did; and he tuck it so hard that everybody allows that the two sermons he preached the next Sabba' day to be the very two worst he ever *did* preach."

"They must have been pretty bad, then," quaintly observed Davis; "I've long set down Minister Whittle's discourses as being a *leetle* the worst going, when you give him a chance."

It is unnecessary to relate any more of this dialogue, nor should we have given the little we have, did it not virtually explain what actually occurred on the publication of the contents of the will. Roswell met with no opposition in proving the instrument; and the day after he was admitted to act as executor he was married to Mary Pratt, and became tenant, by the courtesy, to all her real estate: such being the law *then*, though it is no longer. *Now*, a man and wife may have a very pretty family quarrel about the ownership of a dozen teaspoons, and the last, so far as we can see, may order the first out of one of her rocking-chairs, if she sees fit! Surely domestic peace is not so trifling a matter that the law should seek to add new subjects of strife to the many that seem to be nearly inseparable from the married state.

Let this be as it may, no such law existed when Roswell Gardiner and Mary Pratt became man and wife. One of the first acts of the happy young couple, after they were united, was to make a suitable disposition of the money found buried at the foot of the tree, on the so-much-talked-of key. Its amount was a little more than two thousand dollars; the pirate who made the revelation to Daggett having, in all probabilty, been ignorant himself of the real sum that had been thus

secreted. By a specific bargain with the crew, all this money belonged to the deacon; and, consequently, it had descended to his niece, and through her was now legally the property of Roswell. The young man was not altogether free from scruples about using money that had been originally taken as booty by pirates, and his conscientious wife had still greater objections. After conferring together on the subject, however, and seeing the impossibility of restoring the gold to those from whom it had been forced in the first place, the doubloons were distributed among the families of those who had lost their lives at Sealers' Land. The shares did not amount to much, it is true, but they did good, and cheered the hearts of two or three widows and dependent sisters.

Nor did Roswell Gardiner's care for their welfare stop here. He had the *Sea Lion* put in good order, removed her decks, raised upon her, and put her in her original condition, and sent her to Sealer's Land again, under the orders of Hazard, who was instructed to take in all the oil and skins that had been left behind, and to fill up, if he could, without risking too much by delay. All this was successfully done, the schooner coming back after a very short voyage, and quite full. The money made by this highly successful adventure had the effect to console several of those who had great cause to regret their previous losses.

As to Roswell and Mary, they had much reason to be contented with their lot. The deacon's means were found to be much more considerable than had been supposed. When all was brought into a snug state, Roswell found that his wife was worth more than thirty thousand dollars, a sum which constituted wealth on Oyster Pond in that day. We have, however, already hinted that the simplicity, and we fear with it the happiness, of the place has departed. A railroad terminates within a short distance of the deacon's old residence, bringing with it the clatter, ambition, and rivalry of such a mode of traveling. What is even worse, the venerable and expressive name of "Oyster Pond," one that conveys in its very sound the ideas of savory dishes, and an abundance of a certain and a very agreeable sort, has been changed to "Orient." Heaven save the mark! Long Island has hitherto been famous, in the history of New York, for the homely piquancy of its names, which usually conveyed a graphic idea of the place indicated. It is true, "Jerusalem" cannot boast of its Solomon's Temple, nor "Babylon" of its Hanging Gardens; but, by common consent, it is understood that these two names, and some half-a-dozen more of the same quality, are to be taken by their opposites.

Roswell Gardiner did not let Stimson pass out of his sight, as is customary with seamen when they quit a vessel. He made him master of a sloop that plied between New York and Southold, in which employment the good old man fulfilled his time, leaving to a widowed sister who dwelt with him the means of a comfortable livelihood for life.

The only bit of management of which Mary could be accused, was practiced by her shortly after Stimson's death, and some six or eight years after her own marriage. One of her school friends, and a relative, had married a person who dwelt "west of the bridge," as it is the custom to say of all the counties that lie west of Cayuga Lake. This person, whose name was Hight, had mills, and made large quantities of that excellent flour that is getting to enjoy its merited reputation even in the Old World. He was disposed to form a partnership with Roswell, who sold his property and migrated to the great West, as the country "west of the bridge" was then termed, though it is necessary now to go a thousand miles farther in order to reach what is termed "the western country." Mary had an important agency in bringing about this migration. She had seen certain longings after the ocean, and seals, and whales, in her husband; and did not consider him safe so long as he could scent the odors of a salt marsh. There is delight in this fragrance that none can appreciate so thoroughly as those who have enjoyed it in youth: it remains as long as human senses retain their faculties. An increas-

ing family, however, and el dorado of the West, which, in that day, produced wheat, were inducements for a removal there, and, aided by Mary's gentle management, produced the desired effect; and for more than twenty years Roswell Gardiner has been a very successful miller, on a large scale, in one of the western counties of what is called "the Empire State." We do not think the *sobriquets* of this country very happy, in general, but shall quarrel less with this than with the phrase of "commercial emporium," which is much as if one should say, "a townish town."

Roswell Gardiner has never wavered in his faith, from the time when his feelings were awakened by the just view of his own insignificance, as compared to the power of God. He then learned the first great lesson in religious belief, that of humility; without which no man can be truly penitent, or truly a Christian. He no longer thought of measuring the Deity with his narrow faculties, or of setting up his blind conclusions, in the face of positive revelations. He saw that all must be accepted, or none; and there was too much evidence, too much inherent truth, a morality too divine, to allow a mind like his to reject the gospel altogether. With Mary at his side, he has continued to worship the Trinity, accepting its mysteries in an humble reliance on the words of inspired men.

THE END OF "THE SEA LIONS."

AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

PREFACE.

THE writer has published so much truth which the world has insisted was fiction, and so much fiction which has been received as truth, that, in the present instance, he is resolved to say nothing on the subject. Each of his readers is at liberty to believe just as much, or as little, of the matter here laid before him, or her, as may suit his or her notions, prejudices, knowledge of the world, or ignorance. If anybody is disposed to swear he knows precisely where Clawbonny is, that he was well acquainted with old Mr. Hardinge, nay, has often heard him preach—let him make his affidavit in welcome. Should he get a little wide of the mark, it will not be the first document of that nature which has possessed the same weakness.

It is possible that certain captious persons may be disposed to inquire into the *cui bono?* of such a book. The answer is this. Everything which can convey to the human mind distinct and accurate impressions of events, social facts, professional peculiarities, or past history, whether of the higher or more familiar character, is of use. All that is necessary is, that the pictures should be true to nature, if not absolutely drawn from living sitters. The knowledge we gain by our looser reading often becomes serviceable in modes and manners little anticipated in the moments when it is acquired.

Perhaps the greater portion of our peculiar opinions have their foundations in prejudices. These prejudices are produced in consequence of its being out of the power of any man to see, or know, everything. The most favored mortal must receive far more than half of all that he learns on his faith in others; and it may aid those who can never be placed in positions to judge for themselves of certain phases of men and things, to get pictures of the same, drawn in a way to give them nearer views than they might otherwise obtain. This is the greatest benefit of all light literature in general, it being possible to render that which is purely fictitious even more useful than that which is strictly true, by avoiding extravagances, by portraying with fidelity, and, as our friend Marble might say, by "generalizing" with discretion.

This country has undergone many important changes since the commencement of the present century. Some of these changes have been for the better; others, we think out of all question, for the worse. The last is a fact that can be known to the generation which is coming into life by report only, and these pages may possibly throw some little light on both points, in representing things as they were. The population of the republic is probably something more than eighteen millions and a half to-day; in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred it was but a little more than five millions. In 1800, the population of New York was somewhat less than six hundred thousand souls; to-day it is probably a little less than two millions seven hundred thousand souls. In 1800, the town of New York had sixty thousand inhabitants; whereas, including Brooklyn and Williamsburg, which then virtually had no existence, it must have at this moment quite four hundred thousand. These are prodigious numerical changes, that have produced changes of another sort. Although an in-

crease of numbers does not necessarily infer an increase of high civilization, it reasonably leads to the expectation of great melioration in the commoner comforts. Such has been the result, and to those familiar with facts as they now exist, the difference will probably be apparent in these pages.

Although the moral changes in American society have not kept pace with those that are purely physical, many that are essential have nevertheless occurred. Of all the British possessions on this continent, New York, after its conquest from the Dutch, received most of the social organization of the mother country. Under the Dutch even, it had some of these characteristic peculiarities in its patrons; the lords of the manor of the New Netherlands. Some of the southern colonies, it is true, had their caciques and other semi-feudal and semi-savage noblesse, but the system was of short continuance; the peculiarities of that section of the country arising principally from the existence of domestic slavery on an extended scale. With New York it was different. A conquered colony, the mother country left the impression of its own institutions more deeply engraved than on any of the settlements that were commenced by grants to proprietors, or under charters from the crown. It was strictly a royal colony, and so continued to be, down to the hour of separation. The social consequences of this state of things were to be traced in her habits until the current of immigration became so strong as to bring with it those that were conflicting, if not absolutely antagonist. The influence of these two sources of thought is still obvious to the reflecting, giving rise to a double set of social opinions; one of which bears all the characteristics of its New England and puritanical origin, while the other may be said to come of the usages and notions of the Middle States proper.

This is said in anticipation of certain strictures that will be likely to follow some of the incidents of our story, it not being always deemed an essential in an American critic that he should understand his subject. Too many of them, indeed, justify the retort of the man who derided the claims to knowledge of life set up by a neighbor, that "had been to meetin' and had been to mill." We can all obtain some notions of the portion of a subject that is placed immediately before our eyes; the difficulty is to understand that which we have no means of studying.

On the subject of the nautical incidents of this book, we have endeavored to be as exact as our authorities will allow. We are fully aware of the importance of writing what the world thinks, rather than what is true, and are not conscious of any very palpable errors of this nature.

The author—perhaps editor would be the better word—does not feel himself responsible for all the notions advanced by the hero of this tale, and it may be as well to say as much. That one born in the Revolution should think differently from the men of the present day, in a hundred things, is to be expected. It is in just this difference of opinion that the lessons of the book are to be found.

CHAPTER I.

"And I—my joy of life is fled,
My spirit's power, my bosom's glow;
The raven locks that grac'd my head,
Wave in a wreath of snow!
And where the star of youth arose
I deem'd life's lingering ray should close;
And those lov'd trees my tomb o'ershade,
Beneath whose arching bowers my childhood play'd."
—MRS. HEMANS.

I WAS born in a valley not very remote from the sea. My father had been a sailor in youth, and some of my earliest recollections are connected with the history of his adventures and the recollections they excited. He had been a boy in the war of the Revolution, and had seen some service in the shipping of that period. Among other scenes he witnessed, he had been on board the *Trumbull* in her action with the *Watt*—the hardest-fought naval combat of that war—and he particularly delighted in relating its incidents. He had been wounded in the battle, and bore the marks of the injury in a scar that slightly disfigured a face that, without this blemish,

would have been singularly handsome. My mother, after my poor father's death, always spoke of even this scar as a beauty-spot. Agreeably to my own recollections the mark scarcely deserved that commendation, as it gave one side of the face a grim and fierce appearance, particularly when its owner was displeased.

My father died on the farm on which he was born, and which descended to him from his great-grandfather, an English emigrant that had purchased it of the Dutch colonist who had originally cleared it from the woods. The place was called Clawbonny, which some said was good Dutch, others bad Dutch; and now and then a person ventured a conjecture that it might be Indian. Bonny it was, in one sense at least, for a lovelier farm there is not on the whole of the wide surface of the Empire State. What does not always happen in this wicked world, it was as good as it was handsome. It consisted of three hundred and seventy-two acres of first-rate land, either arable or rich river bottom in meadows, and of more than a hundred of rocky mountain side, that was very tolerably covered with wood. The first of our family who owned the place had built a substantial one-story stone house, that bears the date of 1707 on one of its gables; and to which each of his successors had added a little, until the whole structure got to resemble a cluster of cottages thrown together without the least attention to order or regularity. There were a porch, a front door, and a lawn, however; the latter containing half a dozen acres of a soil as black as one's hat, and nourishing eight or ten elms that were scattered about as if their seeds had been sown broadcast. In addition to the trees and a suitable garniture of shrubbery, this lawn was coated with a sward that, in the proper seasons, rivaled all I have read or imagined of the emerald and shorn slopes of the Swiss valleys.

Clawbonny, while it had all the appearance of being the residence of an affluent agriculturist, had none of the pretension of these latter times. The house had an air of substantial comfort without, an appearance that its interior in no manner contradicted. The ceilings were low, it is true, nor were the rooms particularly large; but the latter were warm in winter, cool in summer, and tidy, neat, and respectable all the year round. Both the parlors had carpets, as had the passages and all the better bedrooms; and there were an old-fashioned chintz settee, well stuffed and cushioned, and curtains in the "big parlor," as we called the best apartment—the pretending name of drawing-room not having reached our valley as far back as the year 1796, or that in which my recollections of the place, as it then existed, are the most vivid and distinct.

We had orchards, meadows, and plowed fields all around us; while the barns, granaries, styes, and other buildings of the farm, were of solid stone, like the dwelling, and all in capital condition. In addition to the place, which he inherited from my grandfather quite without any encumbrance, well stocked and supplied with utensils of all sorts, my father had managed to bring with him from sea some fourteen or fifteen thousand dollars, which he carefully invested in mortgages in the county. He got twenty-seven hundred pounds currency with my mother, similarly bestowed; and, two or three great landed proprietors and as many retired merchants from York excepted, Captain Wallingford was generally supposed to be one of the stiffest men in Ulster County. I do not know exactly how true was this report; though I never saw anything but the abundance of a better sort of American farm under the paternal roof, and I know that the poor were never sent away empty-handed.

It is true that our wine was made of currents; but it was delicious, and there was always a sufficient stock in the cellar to enable us to drink it three or four years old. My father, however, had a small private collection of his own, out of which he would occasionally produce a bottle; and I remember to have heard Governor George Clinton, afterward Vice-President, who was an Ulster County man, and who sometimes stopped at Clawbonny in passing, say that it was excellent East India madeira. As for clarets, burgundy, hock,

and champagne, they were wines then unknown in America, except on the tables of some of the principal merchants, and here and there on that of some traveled gentleman of an estate larger than common. When I say that Governor George Clinton used to stop occasionally and taste my father's madeira, I do not wish to boast of being classed with those who then composed the gentry of the State. To this, in that day, we could hardly aspire, though the substantial hereditary property of my family gave us a local consideration that placed us a good deal above the station of ordinary yeomen. Had we lived in one of the large towns, our association would unquestionably have been with those who are usually considered to be one or two degrees beneath the highest class. These distinctions were much more marked immediately after the war of the Revolution than they are to-day; and they are more marked to-day, even, than all but the most lucky or the most meritorious, whichever fortune dignifies, are willing to allow.

The courtship between my parents occurred while my father was at home to be cured of the wounds he had received in the engagement between the *Trumbull* and the *Watt*. I have always supposed this was the moving cause why my mother fancied that the grim-looking scar on the left side of my father's face was so particularly becoming. The battle was fought in June, 1780, and my parents were married in the autumn of the same year. My father did not go to sea again until after my birth, which took place the very day that Cornwallis capitulated at Yorktown. These combined events set the young sailor in motion, for he felt he had a family to provide for, and he wished to make one more mark on the enemy in return for the beauty-spot his wife so gloried in. He accordingly got a commission in a privateer, made two or three fortunate cruises, and was able at the peace to purchase a prize-brig, which he sailed as master and owner until the year 1790, when he was recalled to the paternal roof by the death of my grandfather. Being an only son, the captain, as my father was uniformly called, inherited the land, stock, utensils, and crops, as already mentioned; while the six thousand pounds currency that were "at use," went to my two aunts, who were thought to be well married to men in their own class of life, in adjacent counties.

My father never went to sea after he inherited Clawbonny. From that time down to the day of his death, he remained on his farm, with the exception of a single winter passed in Albany as one of the representatives of the county. In his day it was a credit to a man to represent a county, and to hold office under the State: though the abuse of the elective principle, not to say of the appointing power, has since brought about so great a change. Then a member of Congress was *somebody;* now he is only—a member of Congress.

We were but two surviving children, three of the family dying infants, leaving only my sister Grace and myself to console our mother in her widowhood. The dire accident which placed her in this, the saddest of all conditions for a woman who had been a happy wife, occurred in the year 1794, when I was in my thirteenth year, and Grace was turned eleven. It may be well to relate the particulars.

There was a mill, just where the stream that runs through our valley tumbles down to a level below that on which the farm lies, and empties itself into a small tributary of the Hudson. This mill was on our property, and was a source of great convenience and of some profit to my father. There he ground all the grain that was consumed for domestic purposes for several miles around; and the tolls enabled him to fatten his porkers and beeves, in a way to give both a sort of established character. In a word, the mill was a concentrating point for all the products of the farm, there being a little landing on the margin of the creek that put up from the Hudson, whence a sloop sailed weekly for town. My father passed half his time about the mill and landing, superintending his workmen, and particularly giving directions about the fitting of the sloop which

was his property also, and about the gear of the mill. He was clever, certainly, and had made several useful suggestions to the millwright who occasionally came to examine and repair the works; but he was by no means so accurate a mechanic as he fancied himself to be. He had invented some new mode of arresting the movement, and of setting the machinery in motion when necessary; what it was, I never knew, for it was not named at Clawbonny after the fatal accident occurred. One day, however, in order to convince the millwright of the excellence of this improvement, my father caused the machinery to be stopped, and then placed his own weight upon the large wheel, in order to manifest the sense he felt in the security of his invention.

He was in the very act of laughing exultingly at the manner in which the millwright shook his head at the risk he ran, when the arresting power lost its control of the machinery, the heavy head of water burst into the buckets, and the wheel whirled round carrying my unfortunate father with it. I was an eye-witness of the whole, and saw the face of my parent, as the wheel turned it from me, still expanded in mirth. There was but one revolution made, when the wright succeeded in stopping the works. This brought the great wheel back nearly to its original position, and I fairly shouted with hysterical delight when I saw my father standing in his tracks, as it might be, seemingly unhurt. Unhurt he would have been, though he must have passed a fearful keel-hauling, but for one circumstance. He had held on to the wheel with the tenacity of a seaman, since letting go his hold would have thrown him down a cliff of near a hundred feet in depth, and he actually passed between the wheel and the planking beneath it unharmed, although there was only an inch or two to spare; but, in rising from this fearful strait, his head had been driven between a projecting beam and one of the buckets, in a way to crush one temple in upon the brain. So swift and sudden had been the whole thing, that, on turning the wheel, his lifeless body was still inclining on its periphery, retained erect, I believe, in consequence of some part of his coat getting attached to the head of a nail. This was the first serious sorrow of my life. I had always regarded my father as one of the fixtures of the world; as a part of the great system of the universe; and had never contemplated his death as a possible thing. That another revolution might occur, and carry the country back under the dominion of the British crown, would have seemed to me far more possible than that my father could die. Bitter truth now convinced me of the fallacy of such notions.

It was months and months before I ceased to dream of this frightful scene. At my age, all the feelings were fresh and plastic, and grief took strong hold of my heart. Grace and I used to look at each other without speaking, long after the event, the tears starting to my eyes, and rolling down her cheeks, our emotions being the only communications between us, but communications that no uttered words could have made so plain. Even now, I allude to my mother's anguish with trembling. She was sent for to the house of the miller, where the body lay, and arrived unapprised of the extent of the evil. Never can I—never shall I forget the outbreakings of her sorrow when she learned the whole of the dreadful truth. She was in fainting fits for hours, one succeeding another, and then her grief found tongue. There was no term of endearment that the heart of woman could dictate to her speech that was not lavished on the lifeless clay. She called the dead "her Miles," "her beloved Miles," "her husband," "her own darling husband," and by such other endearing epithets. Once she seemed as if resolute to arouse the sleeper from his endless trance, and she said, solemnly, "*Father*—dear, *dearest* father!" appealing as it might be to the parent of her children, the tenderest and most comprehensive of all woman's terms of endearment — "Father—dear, dearest father! open your eyes and look upon your babes — your precious girl and noble

boy! Do not thus shut out their sight forever!"

But it was in vain. There lay the lifeless corpse, as insensible as if the spirit of God had never had a dwelling within it. The principal injury had been received on that much-prized scar; and again and again did my poor mother kiss both, as if her caresses might yet restore her husband to life. All would not do. The same evening, the body was carried to the dwelling, and three days later it was laid in the churchyard, by the side of three generations of forefathers, at a distance of only a mile from Clawbonny. That funeral service, too, made a deep impression on my memory. We had some Church of England people in the valley; and old Miles Wallingford, the first of the name, a substantial English franklin, had been influenced in his choice of a purchase by the fact that one of Queen Anne's churches stood so near the farm. To that little church, a tiny edifice of stone, with a high pointed roof, without steeple, bell, or vestry room, had three generations of us been taken up to be christened, and three, including my father, had been taken to be buried. Excellent, kind-hearted, just-minded Mr. Hardinge read the funeral service over the man whom his own father had, in the same humble edifice, christened. Our neighborhood has much altered of late years; but, then, few higher than mere laborers dwelt among us who had not some sort of hereditary claim to be beloved. So it was with our clergyman, whose father had been his predecessor, having actually married my grandparents. The son had united my father and mother, and now he was called on to officiate at the funeral obsequies of the first. Grace and I sobbed as if our hearts would break, the whole time we were in the church; and my poor, sensitive, nervous little sister actually shrieked as she heard the sound of the first clod that fell upon the coffin. Our mother was spared that trying scene, finding it impossible to support it. She remained at home, on her knees, most of the day on which the funeral occurred.

Time soothed our sorrows, though my mother, a woman of more than common sensibility, or, it were better to say, of uncommon affections, never entirely recovered from the effects of her irreparable loss. She had loved too well, too devotedly, too engrossingly, ever to think of a second marriage, and lived only to care for the interest of Miles Wallingford's children. I firmly believe we were more beloved because we stood in this relation to the deceased, than because we were her own natural offspring. Her health became gradually undermined, and, three years after the accident of the mill, Mr. Hardinge laid her at my father's side. I was now sixteen, and can better describe what passed during the last days of her existence, than what took place at the death of her husband. Grace and I were apprised of what was so likely to occur, quite a month before the fatal moment arrived; and we were not so much overwhelmed with sudden grief as we had been on the first great occasion of family sorrow, though we both felt our loss keenly, and my sister, I think I may almost say, inextinguishably. Mr. Hardinge had us both brought to the bedside, to listen to the parting advice of our dying parent, and to be impressed with a scene that is always healthful, if rightly improved. "You baptized these two dear children, good Mr. Hardinge," she said, in a voice that was already enfeebled by physical decay, "and you signed them with the sign of the cross, in token of Christ's death for them; and I now ask of your friendship and pastoral care to see that they are not neglected at the most critical period of their lives—that when impressions are the deepest, and yet the most easily made. God will reward all your kindness to the orphan children of your friends." The excellent divine, a man who lived more for others than for himself, made the required promises, and the soul of my mother took its flight in peace.

Neither my sister nor myself grieved as deeply for the loss of this last of our parents, as we did for that of the first. We had both seen so many instances of her devout goodness, had been witnesses

of so great a triumph of her faith, as to feel an intimate, though silent, persuasion that her death was merely a passage to a better state of existence—that it seemed selfish to regret. Still, we wept and mourned, even while, in one sense, I think we rejoiced. She was relieved from much bodily suffering, and I remember, when I went to take a last look at her beloved face, that I gazed on its calm serenity with a feeling akin to exultation, as I recollected that pain could no longer exercise dominion over her frame, and that her spirit was then dwelling in bliss. Bitter regrets came later, it is true, and these were fully shared—nay, more than shared—by Grace.

After the death of my father, I had never bethought me of the manner in which he had disposed of his property. I heard something said of his will, and gleaned a little, accidentally, of the forms that had been gone through in proving the instrument, and of obtaining its probate. Shortly after my mother's death, however, Mr. Hardinge had a free conversation with both me and Grace on the subject, when we learned, for the first time, the disposition that had been made. My father had bequeathed to me the farm, mill, landing, sloop, stock, utensils, crops, etc., etc., in full property; subject, however, to my mother's use of the whole until I attained my majority; after which I was to give her complete possession of a comfortable wing of the house, which had every convenience for a small family within itself, certain privileges in the fields, dairy, styes, orchards, meadows, granaries, etc., and to pay her three hundred pounds currency per annum, in money. Grace had four thousand pounds that were "at use," and I had all the remainder of the personal property, which yielded about five hundred dollars a year. As the farm, sloop, mill, landing, etc., produced a net annual income of rather more than a thousand dollars, besides all that was consumed in housekeeping, I was very well off, in the way of temporal things, for one who had been trained in habits as simple as those which reigned at Clawbonny.

My father had left Mr. Hardinge the executor, and my mother an executrix of his will, with survivorship. He had also made the same provision as respected the guardians. Thus Grace and I became the wards of the clergyman alone on the death of our last remaining parent. This was grateful to us both, for we both truly loved this good man, and, what was more, we loved his children. Of these there were two, of ages corresponding very nearly with our own; Rupert Hardinge being not quite a year older than I was myself, and Lucy, his sister, about six months younger than Grace. We were all four strongly attached to each other, and had been so from infancy, Mr. Hardinge having had charge of my education as soon as I was taken from a woman's school.

I cannot say, however, that Rupert Hardinge was ever a boy to give his father the delight that a studious, well-conducted, considerate, and industrious child has it so much in his power to yield to his parent. Of the two, I was much the best scholar, and had been pronounced by Mr. Hardinge fit to enter college, a twelvemonth before my mother died; though she declined sending me to Yale, the institution selected by my father, until my school-fellow was similarly prepared, it having been her intention to give the clergyman's son a thorough education, in furtherance of his father's views of bringing him up to the church. This delay, so well and kindly meant, had the effect of changing the whole course of my subsequent life.

My father, it seems, wished to make a lawyer of me, with the natural desire of seeing me advanced to some honorable position in the State. But I was averse to anything like serious mental labor, and was greatly delighted when my mother determined to keep me out of college a twelve-month, in order that my friend Rupert might be my class-mate. It is true I learned quick, and was fond of reading; but the first I could not very well help, while the reading I liked was that which amused, rather than that which instructed me. As for Rupert, though not absolutely dull, but, on the

other hand, absolutely clever in certain things, he disliked mental labor even more than myself, while he liked self-restraint of any sort far less. His father was sincerely pious, and regarded his sacred office with too much reverence to think of bringing up a "cosset-priest," though he prayed and hoped that his son's inclinations, under the guidance of Providence, would take that direction. He seldom spoke of the subject himself, but I ascertained his wishes through my confidential dialogues with his children. Lucy seemed delighted with the idea, looking forward to the time when her brother would officiate in the same desk where her father and grandfather had now conducted the worship of God for more than half a century; a period of time that to us young people seemed to lead us back to the dark ages of the country. And all this the dear girl wished for her brother, in connection with his spiritual rather than his temporal interests, inasmuch as the living was worth only a badly-paid salary of one hundred and fifty pounds currency per annum, together with a small but comfortable rectory, and a glebe of five-and-twenty acres of very tolerable land, which it was thought no sin, in that day, for the clergyman to work by means of two male slaves, whom, with as many females, he had inherited as part of the chattels of his mother.

I had a dozen slaves, also; negroes who, as a race, had been in the family almost as long as Clawbonny. About half of these blacks were singularly laborious and useful, viz., four males and three of the females; but several of the remainder were enjoying *otium*, and not altogether without *dignitate*, as heirlooms to be fed, clothed, and lodged, for the good or evil they had done. There were some small-fry in our kitchens, too, that used to roll about on the grass, and munch fruit in the summer *ad libitum;* and stand so close in the chimney-corners in cold weather, that I have often fancied they must have been, as a legal wit of New York once pronounced certain eastern coal mines to be, incombustible. These negroes all went by the patronymic of Clawbonny, there being among them Hector Clawbonny, Venus Clawbonny, Cæsar Clawbonny, Rose Clawbonny—who was as black as a crow — Romeo Clawbonny, and Julietta, commonly called Julee, Clawbonny; who were, with Pharaoh, Potiphar, Samson, and Nebuchadnezzar, all Clawbonnys in the last resort. Neb, as the namesake of the herbivorous king of Babylon was called, was about my own age, and had been a sort of humble playfellow from infancy; and even now, when it was thought proper to set him about the more serious toil which was to mark his humble career, I often interferred to call him away to be my companion with the rod, the fowling-piece, or in the boat, of which we had one that frequently descended the creek and navigated the Hudson for miles at a time, under my command. The lad, by such means, and through an off-hand friendliness of manner that I rather think was characteristic of my habits at that day, got to love me as a brother or comrade. It is not easy to describe the affection of an attached slave, which has blendid with it the pride of a partisan, the solicitude of a parent, and the blindness of a lover. I do think Neb had more gratification in believing himself particularly belonging to Master Miles, than I ever had in any quality or thing I could call my own. Neb, moreover, liked a vagrant life, and greatly encouraged Rupert and myself in idleness, and a desultory manner of misspending hours that could never be recalled. The first time I ever played truant was under the patronage of Neb, who decoyed me away from my books te go nutting on the mountain, stoutly maintaining that chestnuts were just as good as the spelling-book, or any primer that could be bought in York.

I have forgotten to mention that the death of my mother, which occurred in the autumn, brought about an immediate change in the condition of our domestic economy. Grace was too young, being only fourteen, to preside over such a household, and I could be of little use either in the way of directing or advising. Mr. Hardinge, who had received a letter to

that effect from the dying saint, that was only put into his hand the day after the funeral, with a view to give her request the greater weight, rented the rectory, and came to Clawbonny to live, bringing with him both his children. My mother knew that his presence would be of the greatest service to the orphans she left behind her; while the money saved from his own household expenses might enable this single-minded minister of the altar to lay by a hundred or two for Lucy, who, at his demise, might otherwise be left without a penny, as it was then said, cents not having yet come much into fashion.

This removal gave Grace and me much pleasure, for she was as fond of Lucy as I was of Rupert, and, to tell the truth, so was I, too. Four happier young people were not to be found in the State than we thus became, each and all of us finding in the arrangement exactly the association which was most agreeable to our feelings. Previously, we only saw each other every day; now, we saw each other all day. At night we separated at an early hour, it is true, each having his or her room; but it was to meet at a still earlier hour the next morning, and to resume our amusements in company. From study, all of us were relieved for a month or two, and we wandered through the fields, nutted, gathered fruit, or saw others gather it as well as the crops, taking as much exercise as possible in the open air, equally for the good of our bodies and the lightening of our spirits.

I do not think vanity, or any feeling connected with self-love, misleads me, when I say it would have been difficult to find four young people more likely to attract the attention of a passer-by than we four were, in the fall of 1797. As for Rupert Hardinge, he resembled his mother, and was singularly handsome in face, as well as graceful in movements. He had a native gentility of air, of which he knew how to make the most, and a readiness of tongue and a flow of spirits that rendered him an agreeable, if not a very instructive companion. I was not ill-looking, myself, though far from possessing the striking countenance of my young associate. In manliness, strength, and activity, however, I had essentially the advantage over him, few youths of my age surpassing me in masculine qualities of this nature, after I had passed my twelfth year. My hair was a dark auburn, and it was the only thing about my face, perhaps, that would cause a stranger to notice it; but this hung about my temples and down my neck in rich ringlets, until frequent applications of the scissors brought it into something like subjection. It never lost its beauty entirely, and though now white as snow, it is still admired. But Grace was the one of the party whose personal appearance would be most likely to attract attention. Her face beamed with sensibility and feeling, being one of those countenances on which Nature sometimes delights to impress the mingled radiance, sweetness, truth, and sentiment, that men ascribe to angels. Her hair was lighter than mine; her eyes of a heavenly blue, all softness and tenderness; her cheeks just of the tint of the palest of the colored roses; and her smile so full of gentleness and feeling, that, again and again, it has controlled my ruder and more violent emotions, when they were fast getting the mastery. In form, some persons might have thought Grace, in a slight degree, too fragile, though her limbs would have been delicate models for the study of a sculptor.

Lucy, too, had certainly great perfection, particularly in figure; though in the crowd of beauty that has been so profusely lavished on the youthful in this country, she would not have been at all remarked in a large assembly of young American girls. Her face was pleasing, nevertheless; and there was a piquant contrast between the raven blackness of her hair, the deep blue of her eyes, and the dazzling whiteness of her skin. Her color, too, was high, and changeful with her emotions. As for teeth, she had a set that one might have traveled weeks to meet with their equals; and, though she seemed totally unconscious of the advantage, she had a natural manner of showing them that would have made a far less

interesting face altogether agreeable. Her voice and laugh, too, when happy and free from care, were joyousness itself.

It would be saying too much, perhaps, to assert that any human being was ever totally indifferent to his or her personal appearance. Still, I do not think either of our party, Rupert alone excepted, ever thought on the subject, unless as it related to others, down to the period of which I am now writing. I knew, and saw, and felt that my sister was far more beautiful than any of the young girls of her age and condition that I had seen in her society; and I had pleasure and pride in the fact. I knew that I resembled her in some respects, but I was never coxcomb enough to imagine I had half her good looks, even allowing for difference of sex. My own conceit, so far as I then had any —plenty of it came a year or two later— but my conceit, in 1797, rather ran in the direction of my athletic properties, physical force, which was unusually great for sixteen, and stature. As for Rupert, I would not have exchanged these manly qualities for twenty times his good looks, and a thought of envy never crossed my mind on the subject.

I fancied it might be well enough for a parson to be a little delicate, and a good deal handsome; but for one who intended to knock about the world as I had it already in contemplation to do, strength, health, vigor, courage, and activity were much more to be desired than beauty.

Lucy I never thought of as handsome at all. I saw she was pleasing; fancied she was even more so to me than to any one else; and I never looked upon her sunny, cheerful, and yet perfectly feminine face, without a feeling of serenity and happiness. As for her honest eyes, they invariably met my own with an open frankness that said, as plainly as eyes could say anything, that there was nothing to be concealed.

CHAPTER II.

"Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus;
Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits;—
I rather would entreat thy company
To see the wonders of the world abroad."
—TWO GENTLEMEN OF—CLAWBONNY.

DURING the year that succeeded after I was prepared for Yale, Mr. Hardinge had pursued a very judicious course with my education. Instead of pushing me into books that were to be read in the regular course of the institution, with the idea of lightening my future labors, which would only have been providing excuses for future idleness, we went back to the elementary works, until even he was satisfied that nothing more remained to be done in that direction. I had my two grammars literally by heart, notes and all. Then we revised as thoroughly as possible, reading everything anew, and leaving no passage unexplained. I learned to scan, too, a fact that was sufficient to make a reputation for a scholar, in America, half a century since.* After this we turned our attention to mathematics, a science Mr. Harding rightly enough thought there was no danger of my acquiring too thoroughly. We mastered arithmetic, of which I had a good deal of previous knowledge, in a few weeks, and then I went through trigonometry, with some of the more useful problems in geometry. This was the point at which I had arrived when my mother's death occurred.

As for myself, I frankly admit a strong disinclination to be learned. The law I might be forced to study, but practicing it was a thing my mind has long been made up never to do. There was a small vein of obstinacy in my disposition that would have been very likely to carry me through in such a determination even had

*The writer's master taught him to scan Virgil in 1801. This gentleman was a graduate of Oxford. In 1803, the class to which the writer then belonged in Yale, was the first that ever attempted to scan in that institution. The quantities were in discredit in this country years after this, though Columbia and Harvard were a little in advance of Yale. All that was ever done in the last college, during the writer's time, was to scan the ordinary hexameter of Homer and Virgil.

my mother lived, though deference to her wishes would certainly have carried me as far as the license. Even now she was no more, I was anxious to ascertain whether she had left any directions or requests on the subject, either of which would have been laws to me. I talked with Rupert on this matter, and was a little shocked with the levity with which he treated it. "What difference can it make to your parents, *now*," he said with an emphasis that grated on my nerves, "whether you become a lawyer, or a merchant, or a doctor, or stay here on your farm and be a farmer, like your father?"

"My father had been a sailor," I answered, quick as lightning.

"True; and a noble, manly, gentleman-like calling it is! I never see a sailor that I do not envy him his advantages. Why, Miles, neither of us has ever been in town even, while your mother's boatmen, or your own as they are now, go there regularly once a week. I would give the world to be a sailor."

"You, Rupert! Why, you know that your father intends, or rather wishes, that you should become a clergyman."

"A pretty appearance a young man of my figure would make in the pulpit, Miles, or wearing a surplice. No, no; there have been two Hardinges in the Church in this century, and I have a fancy also to the sea. I suppose you know that my great-grandfather was a captain in the navy, and *he* brought *his* son up a parson; now turn about is fair play, and the parson ought to give a son back to a man-of-war. I've been reading the lives of naval men, and it's surprising how many clergymen's sons, in England, go into the navy, and how many sailors' sons get to be priests."

"But there is no navy in this country now—not even a single ship-of-war, I believe."

"That is the worst of it. Congress *did* pass a law, two or three years since, to build some frigates, but they have never been launched. Now Washington has gone out of office I suppose we shall never have anything good in the country."

I revered the name of Washington, in common with the whole country, but I did not see the *sequitur*. Rupert, however, cared little for logical inferences, usually asserting such things as he wished, and wishing such as he asserted. After a short pause, he continued the discourse. "You are now substantially your own master," he said, "and can do as you please. Should you go to sea and not like it, you have only to come back to this place, where you will be just as much the master as if you had remained here superintending cattle, cutting hay, and fattening pork, the whole time."

"I am not my own master, Rupert, any more than you are, yourself. I am your father's ward, and must so remain for more than five years to come. I am just as much under his control as you, yourself."

Rupert laughed at this, and tried to persuade me it would be a good thing to relieve his worthy father of all responsibility in the affair, if I had seriously determined never to go to Yale, or to be a lawyer, by going off to sea clandestinely, and returning when I was ready. If I ever was to make a sailor, no time was to be lost; for all with whom he had conversed assured him the period of life when such things were best learned was between sixteen and twenty. This I thought probable enough, and I parted from my friend with a promise of conversing further with him on the subject at an early opportunity.

I am almost ashamed to confess that Rupert's artful sophism nearly blinded my eyes to the true distinction between right and wrong. If Mr. Hardinge really felt himself bound by my father's wishes to educate me for the bar, and my own repugnance to the profession was unconquerable, why should I not relieve him from the responsibility at once by assuming the right to judge for myself, and act accordingly? So far as Mr. Hardinge was concerned, I had little difficulty in coming to a conclusion, though the profound deference I still felt for my father's wishes, and more especially for those of my sainted mother, had a hold on my heart, and an influence on my conduct,

that was not so easily disposed of. I determined to have a frank conversation with Mr. Hardinge, therefore, in order to ascertain how far either of my parents had expressed anything that might be considered obligatory to me. My plan went as far as to reveal my own desire to be a sailor, and to see the world, but not to let it be known that I might go off without his knowledge, as this would not be absolutely relieving the excellent divine "from all responsibility in the premises," as was contemplated in the scheme of his own son.

An opportunity soon occurred, when I broached the subject by asking Mr. Hardinge whether my father, in his will, had ordered that I should be sent to Yale, and there be educated for the bar. He had done nothing of the sort. Had he left any particular request, writing, or message on the subject, at all? Not that Mr. Hardinge knew. It is true, the last had heard his friend, once or twice, make some general remark which would lead one to suppose that Captain Wallingford had some vague expectations I might go to the bar, but nothing further. My mind felt vastly relieved by these admissions, for I knew my mother's tenderness too well to anticipate that she would dream of absolutely dictating in a matter that was so clearly connected with my own happiness and tastes. When questioned on this last point, Mr. Hardinge did not hesitate to say that my mother had conversed with him several times concerning her views, as related to my career in life. She wished me to go to Yale, and then to read law, even though I did not practice. As soon as this much was said, the conscientious servant of God paused, to note the effect on me. Reading disappointment in my countenance, I presume, he immediately added, "But your mother, Miles, laid no restraint on you; for she knew it was *you* who was to follow the career, and not herself. 'I should as soon think of commanding whom he was to marry, as to think of forcing a profession on him,' she added. 'He is the one who is to decide this, and he only. We may try to guide and influence him, but not go beyond this. I leave you, dear sir, to do all you think best in this matter, certain that your own wisdom will be aided by the providence of a kind Master.'"

I now plainly told Mr. Hardinge my desire to see the world, and to be a sailor. The divine was astounded at this declaration, and I saw that he was grieved. I believe some religious objections were connected with his reluctance to consent to my following the sea, as a calling. At any rate, it was easy to discover that these objections were lasting and profound. In that day, few Americans traveled, by way of an accomplishment, at all; and those few belonged to a class in society so much superior to mine as to render it absurd to think of sending me abroad with similar views. Nor would my fortune justify such an expenditure. I was well enough off to be a comfortable and free housekeeper, and as independent as a king on my own farm; living in abundance, nay, in superfluity, so far as all the ordinary wants were concerned; but men hesitated a little about setting up for gentlemen at large, in the year 1797. The country was fast getting rich, it is true, under the advantages of its neutral position; but it had not yet been long enough emancipated from its embarrassments to think of playing the nabob on eight hundred pounds currency a year. The interview terminated with a strong exhortation from my guardian not to think of abandoning my books for any project as visionary and useless as the hope of seeing the world in the character of a common sailor.

I related all this to Rupert, who, I now perceived for the first time, did not hesitate to laugh at some of his father's notions, as puritanical and exaggerated. He maintained that every one was the best judge of what he liked, and that the sea had produced quite as fair a proportion of saints as the land. He was not certain, considering the great difference there was in numbers, that more good men might not be traced in connection with the ocean than in connection with any other pursuit.

"Take the lawyers, now, for instance, Miles," he said, "and what can you make

out of them, in the way of religion, I should like to know? They have their consciences out at so much *per diem*, and talk and reason just as zealously for the wrong as they do for the right."

"By George, that is true enough, Rupert. There is old David Dockett, I remember to have heard Mr. Hardinge say, always did double duty for his fee, usually acting as witness as well as advocate. They tell me he will talk by the hour of facts that he and his clients get up between them, and look the whole time as if he believed all he said to be true."

Rupert laughed at this sally, and pushed the advantage it gave him by giving several other examples to prove how much his father was mistaken by supposing that a man was to save his soul from perdition simply by getting admitted to the bar. After discussing the matter a little longer, to my astonishment, Rupert came out with a plain proposal that he and I should elope, go to New York, and ship as foremast-lads in some Indiaman, of which there were then many sailing, at the proper season, from that port. I did not dislike the idea, so far as I was myself concerned; but the thought of accompanying Rupert in such an adventure startled me. I knew I was sufficiently secure of the future to be able to risk a little at the present moment; but such was not the case with my friend. If I made a false step at so early an age, I had only to return to Clawbonny, where I was certain to find competence and a home; but, with Rupert, it was very different. Of the moral hazards I ran, I then knew nothing, and, of course, they gave me no concern. Like all inexperienced persons, I supposed myself too strong in virtue to be in any danger of contamination; and this portion of the adventure was regarded with the self-complacency with which the untried are apt to regard their own powers of endurance. I thought myself morally invulnerable.

But Rupert might find it difficult to retrace any serious error made at his time of life. This consideration would have put an end to the scheme, so far as my companion was concerned, had not the thought suggested itself that I should always have it in my own power to aid my friend. Letting something of this sort escape me, Rupert was not slow in enlarging on it, though this was done with great tact and discretion. He proved that, by the time we both came of age, he would be qualified to command a ship, and that, doubtless, I would naturally desire to invest some of my spare cash in a vessel. The accumulations of my estate alone would do this much, within the next five years, and then a career of wealth and prosperity would lie open before us both.

"It is a good thing, Miles, no doubt," continued this tempting sophist, "to have money at use, and a large farm, and a mill, and such things; but many a ship nets more money in a single voyage than your whole estate would sell for. Those that begin with nothing, too, they tell me, are the most apt to succeed; and if we go off with our clothes only, we shall begin with nothing too. Success may be said to be certain. I like the notion of beginning with nothing, it is so American!"

It is, in truth, rather a besetting weakness of America to suppose that men who have never had any means for qualifying themselves for particular pursuits are the most likely to succeed in them; and especially to fancy that those who "begin poor" are in a much better way for acquiring wealth than they who commence with some means; and I was disposed to lean to this latter doctrine myself, though I confess I cannot recall an instance in which any person of my acquaintance has given away his capital, however large and embarrassing it may have been, in order to start fair with his poorer competitors. Nevertheless, there was something taking, to my imagination, in the notion of being the fabricator of my own fortune. In that day, it was easy to enumerate every dwelling on the banks of the Hudson that aspired to be called a seat, and I had often heard them named by those who were familiar with the river. I liked the thought of erecting a house on the Clawbonny property that might aspire to equal

claims, and to be the owner of a *seat;* though only after I had acquired the means, myself, to carry out such a project. At present, I owned only a *house;* my ambition was to own a *seat.*

In a word, Rupert and I canvassed this matter in every possible way for a month, now leaning to one scheme, and now to another, until I determined to lay the whole affair before the two girls, under a solemn pledge of secrecy. As we passed hours in company daily, opportunities were not wanting to effect this purpose. I thought my friend was a little shy on this project; but I had so much affection for Grace, and so much confidence in Lucy's sound judgment, that I was not to be turned aside from the completion of my purpose. It is now more than forty years since the interview took place in which this confidenee was bestowed; but every minute occurrence connected with it is as fresh in my mind as if the whole had taken place only yesterday.

We were all four of us seated on a rude bench that my mother had caused to be placed under the shade of an enormous oak that stood on the most picturesque spot, perhaps, on the whole farm, and which commanded a distant view of one of the loveliest reaches of the Hudson. Our side of the river, in general, does not possess as fine views as the eastern, for the reason that all our own broken, and in some instances magnificent background of mountains, fills up the landscape for our neighbors, while we are obliged to receive the picture as it is set in a humbler frame; but there are exquisite bits to be found on the western bank, and this was one of the very best of them. The water was as placid as molten silver, and the sails of every vessel in sight were hanging in listless idleness from their several spars, representing commerce asleep. Grace had a deep feeling for natural scenery, and she had a better mode of expressing her thoughts, on such occasions, than is usual with girls of fourteen. She first drew our attention to the view by one of her strong, eloquent bursts of eulogium; and Lucy met the remark with a truthful, simple answer, that showed abundant sympathy with the sentiment, though with less of exaggeration of manner and feeling, perhaps. I seized the moment as favorable for my purpose, and spoke out.

"If you admire a vessel so much, Grace," I said, "you will probably be glad to hear that I think of becoming a sailor."

A silence of near two minutes succeeded, during which time I affected to be gazing at the distant sloops, and then I ventured to steal a glance at my companion. I found Grace's mild eyes earnestly riveted on my face; and, turning from their anxious expression with a little uneasiness, I encountered those of Lucy looking at me as intently as if she doubted whether her ears had not deceived her.

"A sailor, Miles!"—my sister now slowly repeated—"I thought it settled you were to study law."

"As far from that as we are from England; I've fully made up my mind to see the world if I can; and Rupert, here——"

"What of Rupert, here?" Grace asked, a sudden change again coming over her sweet countenance, though I was altogether too inexperienced to understand its meaning. "*He* is certainly to be a clergyman—his dear father's assistant, and a long, long, *very* long time hence, his successor."

I could see that Rupert was whistling on a low key, and affecting to look cool; but my sister's solemn, earnest, astonished manner had more effect on us both, I believe, than either would have been willing to own.

"Come, girls," I said at length, putting the best face on the matter, "there is no use in keeping secrets from *you*—but remember that what I am about to tell you *is* a secret, and on no account is to be betrayed."

"To no one but Mr. Hardinge," answered Grace. "If you intend to be a sailor, he ought to know it."

"That comes from looking at our duties superficially"—I had caught this phrase from my friend—"and not distinguishing properly between their shadows and their substance."

"Duties superficially! I do not understand you, Miles. Certainly Mr. Hardinge ought to be told what profession you mean to follow. Remember, brother, he now fills the place of a parent to you."

"He is not more *my* parent than Rupert's—I fancy you will admit that much!"

"Rupert, again! What has Rupert to do with your going to sea?"

"Promise me, then, to keep my secret, and you shall know all; both you and Lucy must give me your words. I know you will not break them when once given."

"Promise him, Grace," said Lucy, in a low tone, and a voice that, even at that age, I could perceive was tremulous. "If we promise, we shall learn everything, and then may have some effect on these headstrong boys by our advice."

"Boys! *You* cannot mean, Lucy, that Rupert is not to be a clergyman—your father's assistant; that Rupert means to be a sailor, too?"

"One never knows what boys will do. Let us promise them, dear; then we can better judge."

"I do promise you, Miles," said my sister, in a voice so solemn as almost to frighten me.

"And I, Miles," added Lucy; but it was so low, I had to lean forward to catch the syllables.

"This is honest and right"—it was honest, perhaps, but very wrong—"and it convinces me that you are both reasonable, and will be of use to us. Rupert and I have both made up our minds, and intend to be sailors."

Exclamations followed from both girls, and another long silence succeeded.

"As for the law, hang all law!" I continued, hemming, and determined to speak like a man. "I never heard of a Wallingford who was a lawyer."

"But you have *both* heard of Hardinges who were clergymen," said Grace, endeavoring to smile, though the expression of her countenance was so painful that even now I dislike to recall it.

"And sailors, too," put in Rupert, a little more stoutly than I thought possible.

"My father's grandfather was an officer in the navy."

"And *my* father was a sailor himself—in the navy, too."

"But there is no navy in this country now, Miles," returned Lucy, in an expostulating tone.

"What of that! There are plenty of ships. The ocean is just as big, and the world just as wide, as if we had a navy to cover the first. I see no great objection on that account—do you, Ru?"

"Certainly not. What we want is, to go to sea, and that can be done in an Indiaman as well as in a man-of-war."

"Yes," said I, stretching myself with a little importance. "I fancy an Indiaman, a vessel that goes all the way to Calcutta, round the Cape of Good Hope, in the track of Vasquez de Gama, isn't exactly an Albany sloop."

"Who is Vasquez de Gama?" demanded Lucy, with so much quickness as to surprise me.

"Why, a *noble* Portuguese, who discovered the Cape of Good Hope, and first sailed round it, and then went to the Indies. You see, girls, even *nobles* are sailors, and why should not Rupert and I be sailors?"

"It is not that, Miles," my sister answered; "every honest calling is respectable. Have you and Rupert spoken to Mr. Hardinge on this subject?"

"Not exactly—not spoken—hinted only—that is, blindly—not so as to be understood, perhaps."

"He will *never* consent, boys!" and this was uttered with something very like an air of triumph.

"We have no intention of asking it of him, Grace. Rupert and I intend to be off next week, without saying a word to Mr. Hardinge on the subject."

Another long, eloquent silence succeeded, during which I saw Lucy bury her face in her apron, while the tears openly ran down my sister's cheek.

"You *do* not—*cannot* mean to do anything so cruel, Miles?" Grace at length said.

"It is exactly because it will not be cruel, that we intend to do it." Here I

nudged Rupert with my elbow, as a hint that I wanted assistance; but he made no other reply than an answering nudge, which I interpreted into as much as if he had said in terms, "You've got into the scrape in your own way, and you may get out of it in the same manner." "Yes," I continued, finding succor hopeless — "yes, *that's* just it."

"What is just it, Miles? You speak in a way to show that you are not satisfied with yourself—neither you nor Rupert is satisfied with himself, if the truth were known."

"I not satisfied with *myself!* Rupert not satisfied with *himself!* You were never more mistaken in your life, Grace. If there ever were two boys in New York State that were *well* satisfied with themselves they are just Rupert and I."

Here Lucy raised her face from her apron and burst into a laugh, the tears filling her eyes all the while.

"Believe them, dear Grace," she said. "They are precisely two self-satisfied, silly fellows, that have got some ridiculous notions in their heads, and then begin to talk about 'superficial views of duties,' and all such nonsense. My father will set it all right, and the boys will have had their talk."

"Not so fast, Miss Lucy, if you please. Your father will not know a syllable of the matter until you tell him all about it, after we are gone. We intend to 'relieve him from all responsibility in the premises.'"

This last sounded very profound, and a little magnificent, to my imagination; and I looked at the girls to note the effect. Grace was weeping, and weeping only; but Lucy looked saucy and mocking, even while the tears bedewed her smiling face, as rain sometimes falls while the sun is shining.

"Yes," I repeated, with emphasis, "'of all responsibility in the premises.' I hope that is plain English, and good English, although I know that Mr. Hardinge has been trying to make you both so simple in your language, that you turn up your noses at a profound sentiment, whenever you hear one."

In 1797 the grandiose had by no means made the deep invasion into the every-day language of the country that it has since done. Anything of the sublime, or of the recondite school was a good deal more apt to provoke a smile than it is to-day—the improvement proceeding, as I have understood through better judges than myself, from the great melioration of mind and manners that is to be traced to the speeches in Congress, and to profundities of the newspapers. Rupert, however, frequently ornamented his ideas, and, I may truly say, everything ambitious that adorned my discourse was derived from his example. I almost thought Lucy impertinent for presuming to laugh at sentiments which came from such a source, and, by way of settling my own correctness of thought and terms, I made no bones of falling back on my great authority, by fairly pointing him out.

"I thought so!" exclaimed Lucy, now laughing with all her heart, though a little hysterically; "I thought so, for this is just like Rupert, who is always talking to me about 'assuming the responsiblity,' and 'conclusions in the premises,' and all such nonsense. Leave the boys to my father, Grace, and he will 'assume the responsibility' of 'concluding the premises,' and the whole of the foolish scheme along with it!"

This would have provoked me, had not Grace manifested so much sisterly interest in my welfare that I was soon persuaded to tell *her*—that minx Lucy overhearing every syllable, though I had half a mind to tell her to go away—all about our project.

"You see," I continued, "if Mr. Hardinge knew anything about our plan, people will say he ought to have stopped us. 'He a clergyman, and not able to keep two lads of sixteen or seventeen from running away and going to sea!' they will say, as if it were so easy to prevent two spirited youths from seeing the world. Whereas, if he knew nothing about it, nobody can blame him. That is what I call 'relieving him from the responsibility.' Now, we intend to be off next week, or as soon as the jackets and trousers that are

making for us, under the pretense of being boat-dresses, are finished. We mean to go down the river in the sail-boat, taking Neb with us to bring the boat back. Now you know the whole story, there will be no occasion to leave a letter for Mr. Hardinge; for, three hours after we have sailed, you can tell him everything. We shall be gone a year; at the end of that time you may look for us both; and glad enough shall we all be to see each other. Rupert and I will be young men then, though you call us boys now."

This last picture a good deal consoled the girls. Rupert, too, who had unaccountably kept back, throwing the laboring-oar altogether on me, came to the rescue, and, with his subtle manner and oily tongue, began to make the wrong appear the right. I do not think he blinded his own sister in the least, but I fear he had too much influence over mine. Lucy, though all heart, was as much matter-of-fact as her brother was a sophist. He was ingenious in glozing over truths; she, nearly unerring in detecting them. I never knew a greater contrast between two human beings, than there was between these two children of the same parents, in this particular. I have heard that the son took after the mother, in this respect, and that the daughter took after the father; though Mrs. Hardinge died too early to have had any moral influence on the character of her children.

We came again and again to the discussion of our subject during the next two or three days. The girls endeavored earnestly to persuade us to ask Mr. Hardinge's permission for the step we were about to undertake; but all in vain. We lads were so thoroughly determined to "relieve the divine from all the responsibility in the premises," that they might as well have talked to stones. We knew these just-minded, sincere, upright girls would not betray us, and continued obdurate to the last. As we expected, as soon as convinced their importunities were useless, they seriously set about doing all they could to render us comfortable. They made us duck bags to hold our clothes, two each, and mended our linen, stockings, etc., and even helped to procure us some clothes more suited to the contemplated expedition than most of those we already possessed. Our "long togs," indeed, we determined to leave behind us, retaining just one suit each, and that of the plainest quality. In the course of a week everything was ready, our bags well-lined, being concealed in the storehouse at the landing. Of this building I could at any moment procure the key, my authority as heir-apparent being very considerable, already, on the farm.

As for Neb, he was directed to have the boat all ready for the succeeding Tuesday evening, it being the plan to sail the day after the *Wallingford* of Clawbonny (this was the name of the sloop) had gone on one of her regular trips, in order to escape a pursuit. I had made all the calculations about the tide, and knew that the *Wallingford* would go out about nine in the morning, leaving us to follow before midnight. It was necessary to depart at night and when the wharf was clear, in order to avoid observation.

Tuesday was an uneasy, nervous, and sad day for us all, Mr. Hardinge excepted. As the last had not the smallest distrust, he continued calm, quiet, and cheerful as was his wont. Rupert had a conscience-stricken and furtive air about him, while the eyes of the two dear girls were scarcely a moment without tears. Grace seemed now the most composed of the two, and I have since suspected that she had had a private conversation with my ingenious friend, whose convincing powers were of a very extraordinary quality, when he set about their use in downright earnest. As for Lucy, she seemed to me to have been weeping the entire day.

At nine o'clock it was customary for the whole family to separate, after prayers. Most of us went to bed at that early hour, though Mr. Hardinge himself seldom sought his pillow until midnight. This habit compelled us to use a good deal of caution in getting out of the house, in which Rupert and myself succeeded, however, without discovery just as the clock

struck eleven. We had taken leave of the girls in a hasty manner, in a passage, shaking hands, and each of us kissing his own sister, as he affected to retire for the night. To own the truth, we were much gratified in finding how reasonably Grace and Lucy behaved on the occasion, and not a little surprised, for we had expected a scene, particularly with the former.

We walked away from the house with heavy hearts, few leaving the paternal roof for the first time, to enter upon the chances of the world, without a deep sense of the dependence in which they had hitherto lived. We walked fast and silently, and reached the wharf in less than half an hour, a distance of near two miles. I was just on the point of speaking to Neb, whose figure I could see in the boat, when I caught a glimpse of two female forms within six feet of us. There were Grace and Lucy, in tears, both waiting our arrival, with a view to see us depart! I confess I was shocked and concerned at seeing these two delicate girls so far from their home, at such an hour; and my first impulse was to see them both safely back before I would enter the boat; but to this neither of them would consent. All my entreaties were thrown away, and I was obliged to submit.

I know not exactly how it happened, but of the fact I am certain; odd as it may seem, at a moment like that, when about to separate, instead of each youth's getting his own sister aside to make his last speeches, and say his last say to, each of us got his friend's sister aside. I do not mean that we were making love, or anything of the sort; we were a little too young, perhaps, for that; but we obeyed an impulse which, as Rupert would have said, "produced that result."

What passed between Grace and her companion, I do not know. As for Lucy and myself, it was all plain sailing and fair dealing. The excellent creature forced on me six gold pieces, which I knew had come to her as an heirloom from her mother, and which I had often heard her declare she never meant to use, unless in the last extremity. She knew I had but five dollars on earth, and that Rupert had not one; and she offered me this gold. I told her Rupert had better take it; no, I had better take it. I should use it more prudently than Rupert, and would use it for the good of both. "Besides, you are rich," she said, smiling through her tears, "and can repay me—I *lend* them to you; to Rupert I should have to *give* them." I could not refuse the generous girl, and took the money, all half-joes, with a determination to repay them with interest. Then I folded her to my heart, and kissed her six or eight times with fervor, the first time I had done such a thing in two years, and tore myself away. I do not think Rupert embraced Grace, but I confess I do not know, although we were standing within three or four yards of each other, the whole time.

"Write, Miles—write, Rupert," said the sobbing girls, leaning forward from the wharf, as we shoved off. It was not so dark but we could see their dear forms for several minutes, or until a bend in the creek put a dark mass of earth between us and them.

Such was the manner of my departure from Clawbonny, in the month of September, 1797. I wanted a few days of being seventeen; Rupert was six months older, and Neb was his senior, again, by near a twelvemonth. Everything was in the boat but our hearts. Mine, I can truly say, remained with the two beloved creatures we left on the wharf; while Rupert's was betwixt and between, I fancy—seldom absolutely deserting the dear tenement in which it was incased by nature.

CHAPTER III.

"There's a youth in this city, it were a great pity
That he from our lasses should wonder awa';
For he's bonny and braw, weel-favored witha',
And his hair has a natural buckle and a'.
His coat is the hue of his bonnet so blue;
His pocket is white as the new-driven snaw;
His hose they are blae, and his shoon like the slae,
And his clean siller buckles they dazzle us a'."

—BURNS.

WE had selected our time well, as respects the hour of departure. It was young ebb, and the boat floated swiftly

down the creek, though the high banks of the latter would have prevented our feeling any wind, even if there were a breeze on the river. Our boat was of some size, sloop-rigged and half-decked; but Neb's vigorous arms made her move through the water with some rapidity, and, to own the truth, the lad sprung to his work like a true runaway negro. I was a skillful oarsman, myself, having received many lessons from my father in early boyhood, and being in almost daily practice for seven months in the year. The excitement of the adventure, its romance, or what for a short time seemed to me to be a romance, and the secret apprehension of being detected, which I believe accompanies every clandestine undertaking, soon set me in motion also. I took one of the oars, and, in less than twenty minutes, the *Grace and Lucy*, for so the boat was called, emerged from between two high, steep banks, aad entered on the broader bosom of the Hudson.

Neb gave a half-suppressed, negro-like cry of exultation, as we shot out from our cover, and ascertained that there was a pleasant and fair breeze blowing. In three minutes we had the jib and mainsail on the boat; the helm was up, the sheet was eased off, and we were gliding down-stream at the rate of something like five miles an hour. I took the helm, almost as a matter of course; Rupert being much to indolent to do anything unnecessarily, while Neb was far too humble to aspire to such an office while Master Miles was there, willing and ready. In that day, indeed, it was so much a matter of course for a skipper of a Hudson River craft to steer, that most of the people who lived on the banks of the stream imagined that Sir John Jervis, Lord Anson, and the other great English admirals of whom they had read and heard, usually amused themselves with that employment out on the ocean. I remember the hearty laugh in which my unfortunate father indulged, when Mr. Hardinge once asked him how he could manage to get any sleep on account of this very duty. But we were very green, up to Clawbonny, in most things that related to the world.

The hour that succeeded was one of the most painful I ever passed in my life. I recalled my father, his manly frankness, his liberal bequests in my favor, and his precepts of respect and obedience; all of which, it now seemed to me, I had openly dishonored. Then came the image of my mother, with her love and sufferings, her prayers, and her mild, but earnest exhortations to be good. I thought I could see both these parents regarding me with sorrowful, though not with reproachful countenances. They appeared to be soliciting my return with a species of silent, but not the less eloquent warnings of the consequences. Grace and Lucy, and their sobs, and admonitions, and entreaties to abandon my scheme, and to write, and not to remain away long, and all that tender interest had induced two warm-hearted girls to utter at our parting, came fresh and vividly to my mind. The recollection proved nearly too much for me. Nor did I forget Mr. Hardinge, and the distress he would certainly feel when he discovered that he had not only lost his ward, but his only son. Then Clawbonny itself, the house, the orchards, the meadows, the garden, the mill, and all that belonged to the farm began to have a double value in my eyes, and to serve as so many cords attached to my heart-strings, and to remind me that the rover

"Drags at each remove a lengthening chain."

I marveled at Rupert's tranquillity. I did not then understand his character as thoroughly as I subsequently got to know it. All that he most prized was with him in the boat, in fact, and this lessened his grief at parting from less beloved objects. Where Rupert was, there was his paradise. As for Neb, I do believe his head was over his shoulder, for he affected to sit with his face down-stream, so long as the hills that lay in the rear of Clawbonny could at all be distinguished. This must have proceeded from tradition, or instinct, or some latent negro quality; for I do not think the fellow fancied *he* was running away. He knew that his two young masters were; but he was fully aware he was my property, and, no doubt, thought, as

long as he stayed in my company, he was in the line of his legitimate duty. Then it was *my* plan that he should return with the boat, and, perhaps, these backward glances were no more than the shadows of coming events, cast, in his case, *behind*.

Rupert was indisposed to converse, for, to tell the truth, he had eaten a hearty supper, and began to feel drowsy; and I was too much wrapped up in my own busy thoughts to solicit any communications. I found a sort of saddened pleasure in setting a watch for the night, therefore, which had an air of seaman-like duty about it, that in a slight degree revived my old taste for the profession. It was midnight, and I took the first watch myself, bidding my two companions to crawl under the half-deck and go to sleep. This they both did without any parley, Rupert occupying an inner place, while Neb lay with his legs exposed to the night air.

The breeze freshened, and for some time I thought it might be necessary to reef, though we were running dead before the wind. I succeeded in holding on, however, and I found the *Grace and Lucy* was doing wonders in my watch. When I gave Rupert his call at four o'clock, the boat was just approaching two frowning mountains, where the river was narrowed to a third or fourth of its former width; and, by the appearance of the shores, and the dim glimpses I had caught of a village of no great size on the right bank, I knew we were in what is called Newburg Bay. This was the extent of our former journeyings south, all three of us having once before, and only once, been as low as Fishkill Landing, which lies opposite to the place that gives this part of the river its name.

Rupert now took the helm, and I went to sleep. The wind still continued fresh and fair, and I felt no uneasiness on account of the boat. It is true, there were two parts of the navigation before us, of which I had thought a little seriously, but not sufficiently so to keep me awake. These were the Race, a passage in the Highlands, and Tappan Sea; both points on the Hudson of which the navigators of that classical stream were fond of relating the marvels. The first I knew was formidable only later in the autumn, and as for the last, I hoped to enjoy some of its wonders in the morning. In this very justifiable expectation, I fell asleep.

Neb did not call me until ten o'clock. I afterward discovered that Rupert kept the helm for only an hour, and then, calculating that from five until nine were four hours, he thought it a pity the negro should not have his share of the glory of that night. When I was awakened, it was merely to let me know that it was time to eat something—Neb would have starved before he would precede his young master in that necessary occupation—and I found Rupert in a deep and pleasant sleep at my side.

We were in the center of Tappan, and the Highlands had been passed in safety. Neb expatiated a little on the difficulties of the navigation, the river having many windings, besides being bounded by high mountains; but, after all, he admitted that there was water enough, wind enough, and a road that was plain enough. From this moment, excitement kept us wide awake. Everything was new, and everything seemed delightful. The day was pleasant, the wind continued fair, and nothing occurred to mar our joy. I had a little map, one neither particularly accurate, nor very well engraved; and I remember the importance with which, after having ascertained the fact myself, I pointed out to my two companions the rocky precipices on the western bank, as New Jersey! Even Rupert was struck with this important circumstance. As for Neb, he was actually in ecstasies, rolling his large black eyes, and showing his white teeth, until he suddenly closed his truly coral and plump lips, to demand what New Jersey meant. Of course I gratified this laudable desire to obtain knowledge, and Neb seemed still more pleased than ever, now he had ascertained that New Jersey was a State. Traveling was not as much of an everyday occupation, at that time, as it is now; and it was, in truth, something for three American lads, all under nineteen, to be able to say that they had seen a State other than their own.

Notwithstanding the rapid progress we had made for the first few hours of our undertaking, the voyage was far from being ended. About noon the wind came out light from the southward, and, having a flood-tide, we were compelled to anchor. This made us all uneasy, for, while we were stationary, we did not seem to be running away. The ebb came again, at length, however, and then we made sail, and began to turn down with the tide. It was near sunset before we got a view of the two or three spires that then piloted strangers to the town. New York was not the "commercial emporium" in 1796; so high-sounding a title, indeed, scarce belonging to the simple English of the period, it requiring a very great collection of half-educated men to venture on so ambitious an appellation—the only emporium that existed in America, during the last century, being a slop-shop in Water Street, and on the Island of Manhattan. *Commercial* emporium was a flight of fancy, indeed, that must have required a whole board of aldermen, and an extra supply of turtle to sanction. What is meant by a *literary* emporium, I leave those editors who are "native and to the *manor* born," to explain.

We first saw the State prison, which was then new, and a most imposing edifice, according to our notions, as we drew near the town. Like the gallows first seen by a traveler in entering a strange country, it was a pledge of civilization. Neb shook his head, as he gazed at it, with a moralizing air, and said it had a "wicked look."

For myself, I own I did not regard it altogether without dread. On Rupert it made less impression than on any of the three. He was always somewhat obtuse on the subject of morals.*

New York, in that day, and on the Hudson side of the town, commenced a short distance above Duane Street. Between Greenwich, as the little hamlet around the State prison was called, and the town proper, was an interval of a mile and a half of open fields, dotted here and there with country houses. Much of this space was in broken hills, and a few piles of lumber lay along the shores. St. John's Church had no existence, and most of the ground in its vicinity was in low swamp. As we glided along the wharves, we caught sight of the first market I had then ever seen—such proofs of an advanced civilization not having yet made their way into the villages of the interior. It was called "The Bear," from the circumstance that the first meat ever exposed for sale in it was of that animal, but the appellation has disappeared before the intellectual refinement of these later times—the name of the soldier and statesman, Washington, having fairly supplanted that of the bear! Whether this great moral improvement was brought about by the Philosophical Society, or the Historical Society, or "The Merchants," or the Aldermen of New York, I have never ascertained. If the latter, one cannot but admire their disinterested modesty in conferring this notable honor on the Father of his Country, inasmuch as all can see that there never has been a period when their own board has not possessed distinguished members, every way qualified to act as godfathers to the most illustrious markets of the republic.

But Manhattan, in the way of taste, has never had justice done it. So profound is its admiration for all the higher qualities, that Franklin and Fulton have each a market to himself, in addition to this bestowed on Washington. Doubtless there would have been Newton Market, and Socrates Market, and Solomon Market, but for the patriotism of the town, which has forbidden it from going out of the hemisphere in quest of names to illustrate. Bacon Market would doubtless have been too equivocal to be tolerated, under any circumstances. Then Bacon was a rogue, though a philosopher, and markets are always appropriated to honest people. At all events, I am rejoiced the reproach of having a market called "The Bear" has been taken away, as it

*It may be well to tell the European who shall happen to read this book, that in America a "State's prison" is not for prisoners of state, but for common rogues; the term coming from the name borne by the local governments.

was tacitly admitting our living near, if not absolutely in, the woods.

We passed the Albany basin, a large receptacle for North River craft, that is now in the bosom of the town and built on, and recognized in it the mast-head of the *Wallingford*. Neb was shown the place, for he was to bring the boat round to it, and join the sloop, in readiness to return in her. We rounded the Battery, then a circular strip of grass, with an earthen and wooden breastwork running along the margin of the water, leaving a narrow promenade on the exterior. This brought us to Whitehall, since so celebrated for its oarsmen, where we put in for a haven. I had obtained the address of a better sort of sailor-tavern in that vicinity, and, securing the boat, we shouldered the bags, got a boy to guide us, and were soon housed. As it was near night, Rupert and I ordered supper, and Neb was directed to pull the boat round to the sloop, and to return to us in the morning; taking care, however, not to let our lodgings be known.

The next day, I own I thought but little of the girls, Clawbonny, or Mr. Hardinge. Neb was at my bedside before I was up, and reported the *Grace and Lucy* safe alongside of the *Wallingford*, and expressed himself ready to wait on me in my progress in quest of a ship. As this was the moment of action, little was said, but we all breakfasted, and sallied forth, in good earnest, on the important business before us. Neb was permitted to follow, but at such a distance as to prevent his being suspected of belonging to our party—a gentleman with a serving-man at his heels, not being the candidate most likely to succeed in his application for a berth in the forecastle.

So eager was I to belong to some sea-going craft, that I would not stop even to look at the wonders of the town before we took the direction of the wharves. Rupert was for pursuing a different policy, having an inherent love of the gentleer gayeties of a town, but I turned a deaf ear to his hints, and this time I was master. He followed me with some reluctance but follow he did, after some remonstrances that bordered on warmth. Any inexperienced eye that had seen us passing, would have mistaken us for two well-looking, smart young sailor boys, who had just returned from a profitable voyage, and who, well-clad, tidy, and semi-genteel, were strolling along the wharves as *admirateurs*, not to say critics, of the craft. *Admirateurs* we were, certainly, or I was, at least; though knowledge was a point on which we were sadly deficient.

The trade of America was surprisingly active in 1797. It had been preyed upon by the two great belligerents of the period, England and France, it is true; and certain proceedings of the latter nation were about to bring the relations of the two countries into a very embarrassed state; but still the shipping interest was wonderfully active, and, as a whole, singularly successful. Almost every tide brought in or took out ships for foreign ports, and scarce a week passed that vessels did not arrive from, or sail for, all the different quarters of the world. An Indiaman, however, was our object; the voyage being longer, the ships better, and the achievement greater, than merely to cross the Atlantic and return. We accordingly proceeded toward the Fly Market, in the vicinity of which, we had been given to understand, some three or four vessels of that description were fitting out. This market has since used its wings to disappear altogether.

I kept my eyes on every ship we passed. Until the previous day, I had never seen a square-rigged vessel; and no enthusiast in the arts ever gloated on a fine picture or statue with greater avidity than my soul drank in the wonder and beauty of every ship I passed. I had a large, full-rigged model at Clawbonny; and this I had studied under my father so thoroughly as to know the name of every rope in it, and to have some pretty distinct notions of their uses. This early schooling was now of great use to me, though I found it a little difficult at first to trace my old acquaintances on the large scale in which they now presented themselves, and amid the intricate mazes that were drawn against the skies. The braces, shrouds,

stays and halyards were all plain enough, and I could point to either, at a moment's notice; but when it came to the rest of the running rigging, I found it necessary to look a little, before I could speak with certainty.

Eager as I was to ship, the indulgence of gazing at all I saw was so attractive, that it was noon before we reached an Indiaman. This was a pretty little ship of about four hundred tons, that was called the *John*. Little I say, for such she would now be thought, though a vessel of her size was then termed large. The *Manhattan*, much the largest ship out of the port, measured but about seven hundred tons; while few even of the Indiamen were much beyond five hundred. I can see the *John* at this moment, near fifty years after I first laid eyes on her, as she then appeared. She was not bright-sided, but had a narrow, cream-colored streak, broken into ports. She was a straight, black-looking craft, with a handsome billet, low, thin bulwarks, and waist cloths secured to ridge-ropes. Her larger spars were painted the same color as her streak, and her stern had a few ornaments of a similar tint.

We went on board the *John*, where we found the officers just topping off with the riggers and stevedores, having stowed all the provisions and water, and the mere trifle of cargo she carried. The mate, whose name was Marble, and a well-veined bit of marble he was, his face resembling a map that had more rivers drawn on it than the land could feed, winked at the captain and nodded his head toward us as soon as we met his eye. The latter smiled, but did not speak.

"Walk this way, gentlemen—walk this way, if you please," said Mr. Marble, encouragingly, passing a ball of spun-yarn, all the while, to help a rigger serve a rope. "When did you leave the country?"

This produced a general laugh, even the yellow rascal of a mulatto, who was passing into the cabin with some crockery, grinning in our faces at this salutation. I saw it was now or never, and determined not to be browbeaten, while I was too truthful to attempt to pass for that I was not.

"We left home last night, thinking to be in time to find berths in one of the Indiamen, that is to sail this week."

"Not *this* week, my son—not till *next*," said Mr. Marble, jocularly. "Sunday is *the* day. We run from Sunday to Sunday—the better day, the better deed, you know. How did you leave father and mother?"

"I have neither," I answered, almost choked. "My mother died a few months since, and my father, Captain Wallingford, has now been dead some years."

The master of the *John* was a man of about fifty, red-faced, hard-looking, pock-marked, square-rigged, and of an exterior that promised anything but sentiment. Feeling, however, he did manifest, the moment I mentioned my father's name. He ceased his employment, came close to me, gazed earnestly in my face, and even looked kind.

"Are you a son of Captain Miles Wallingford?" he asked in a low voice—"of Miles Wallingford, from up the river?"

"I am, sir; his only son. He left but two of us, a son and a daughter; and, though under no neceesity to work at all, I wish to make this Miles Wallingford as good a seaman as the last, and, I hope, as honest a man."

This was said manfully, and with a spirit that must have pleased; for I was shaken cordially by the hand, welcomed on board, invited into the cabin, and asked to take a seat at a table on which the dinner had just been placed. Rupert, of course, shared in all these favors. Then followed the explanations. Captain Robbins of the *John* had first gone to sea with my father, for whom I believe he entertained a profound respect. He had even served with him once as mate, and talked as if he felt that he had been under obligations to him. He did not question me very closely, seeming to think it natural enough that Miles Wallingford's only son should wish to be a seaman.

As we sat at the table, even, it was agreed that Rupert and I should join the

ship, as green hands, the very next morning, signing the articles as soon as we went on shore. This was done accordingly, and I had the felicity of writing Miles Wallingford to the roll d'equipage, to the tune of eighteen dollars per month—seamen then actually receiving thirty and thirty-five dollars per month—wages. Rupert was taken also, though Captain Robbins cut *him* down to thirteen dollars, saying, in a jesting way, that a parson's son could hardly be worth as much as the son of one of the best old ship-master's who ever sailed out of America. He was a shrewd observer of men and things, this new friend of mine, and I believe understood "by the cut of his jib," that Rupert was not likely to make a weather-earing man. The money, however, was not of much account in our calculations; and lucky enough did I think myself in finding so good a berth, almost as soon as looked for. We returned to the tavern and stayed that night, taking a formal leave of Neb, who was to carry the good news home, as soon as the sloop should sail.

In the morning a cart was loaded with our effects, the bill was discharged, and we left the tavern. I had the precaution not to go directly alongside the ship. On the contrary, we proceeded to an opposite part of the town, placing the bags on a wharf resorted to by craft from New Jersey, as if we intended to go on board one of them. The cartman took his quarter, and drove off, troubling himself very little about the future movements of two young sailors. Waiting half an hour, another cart was called, when we went to the *John*, and were immediately installed in her forecastle. Captain Robbins had provided us both with chests, paid for out of the three months' advance, and in them we found the slops necessary for so long a voyage. Rupert and I immediately put on suits of these new clothes with regular little round tarpaulins, which so much altered us in appearance, even from those produced by our Ulster County fittings, that we scarce knew each other.

Rupert now went on deck to lounge and smoke a cigar, while I went aloft, visiting every yard, and touching all three of the trucks, before I returned from this, *my* exploring expedition. The captain and mates and riggers smiled at my movements, and I overheard the former telling his mate that I was "old Miles over again." In a word, all parties seemed pleased with the arrangement that had been made. I had told the officers aft of my knowledge of the names and uses of most of the ropes; and never did I feel so proud as when Mr. Marble called out, in a loud tone—

"D'ye hear there, Miles—away aloft and unreeve them fore-topgallant halyards, and send an end down to haul up this new rope, to reeve a fresh set."

Away I went, my head buzzing with the complicated order, and yet I had a very tolerable notion of what was to be done. The unreeving might have been achieved by any one, and I got through with that without difficulty; and, the mate himself helping me and directing me from the deck, the new rope was rove with distinguished success. This was the first duty I ever did in a ship, and I was prouder of it than of any that was subsequently performed by the same individual. The whole time I was thus occupied, Rupert stood lounging against the foot of the mainstay, smoking his cigar like a burgomaster. His turn came next, however, the captain sending for him to the cabin, where he set him to work to copy some papers. Rupert wrote a beautiful hand, and he wrote rapidly. That evening I heard the chief mate tell the dickey that the parson's son was likely to turn out a regular "barber's clerk" to the captain. "The old man," he added, "makes so many traverses himself on a bit of paper, that he hardly knows at which end to begin to read it; and I shouldn't wonder if he just stationed this chap, with a quill behind his ear, for the v'y'ge."

For the next two or three days I was delightfully busy, passing half the time aloft. All the sails were to be bent, and I had my full share in the performance of this duty. I actully furled the mizzen-royal with my own hands—the ship carrying standing royals—and it was said to be very respectably done; a little rag-bag-

gish in the bunt, perhaps, but secured in a way that took the next fellow who touched the gasket five minutes to cast the sail loose. Then it rained, and sails were to be loosened to dry. I let everything fall forward with my own hands, and when we came to roll up the canvas again, I actually managed all three of the royals alone; one at a time of course. My father had taught me to make a flat-knot, a bowline, a clove-hitch, two half-hitches, and such sort of things; and I got through with both a long and a short splice tolerably well. I found all this, and the knowledge I had gained from my model ship at home, of great use to me; so much so, indeed, as to induce even that indurated bit of mortality, Marble, to say I "was the ripest piece of green stuff he had ever fallen in with."

All this time Rupert was kept at quill-driving. Once he got leave to quit the ship—it was the day before we sailed—and I observed he went ashore in his long togs, of which each of us had one suit. I stole away the same afternoon to find the post-office, and work up stream as far as Broadway, not knowing exactly which way to shape my course. In that day everybody who was *any*body, and unmarried, promenaded the west side of the street, from the Battery to St. Paul's Church, between the hours of twelve and half-past two, wind and weather permitting. There I saw Rupert in his country guise, nothing remarkable, of a certainty, strutting about with the best of them, and looking handsome in spite of his rusticity. It was getting late, and he left the street just as I saw him. I followed, waiting until we got to a private place before I would speak to him, however, as I knew he would be mortified to be taken for the friend of a Jack-tar in such a scene.

Rupert entered a door, and then reappeared with a letter in his hand. He, too, had gone to the post-office, and I no longer hesitated about joining him.

"Is it from Clawbonny?" I asked, eagerly. "If so, from Lucy, doubtless?"

"From Clawbonny—but from Grace," he answered with a slight change of color. "I desired the poor girl to let me know how things passed off after we left them; and as for Lucy, her pothooks are so much out of the way, I never want to see them."

I felt hurt, offended, that *my* sister should write to any youngster but myself. It is true the letter was to a bosom friend—a co-adventurer, one almost a child of the same family—and I had come to the office expecting to get a letter from Rupert's sister, who had promised, while weeping on the wharf, to do exactly the same thing for me; but there *is* a difference between one's sister writing to another young man, and another young man's sister writing to one's self. I cannot even now explain it; but that there *is* a difference I am sure. Without asking to see a line that Grace had written, I went into the office, and returned in a minute or two, with an air of injured dignity, holding Lucy's epistle in my hand.

After all there was nothing in either letter to excite much sensibility. Each was written with the simplicity, truth and feeling of a generous-minded, warm-hearted, female friend, of an age not to distrust her own motives, to a lad who had no right to view the favor other than it was, as an evidence of early and intimate friendship. Both epistles are now before me, and I copy them as the shortest way of letting the reader know the effect our disappearance had produced at Clawbonny. That of Grace was couched in the following terms:

"DEAR RUPERT:—Clawbonny was in commotion at nine o'clock this morning, and well it might be! When your father's anxiety got to be painful, I told him the whole and gave him the letters. I am sorry to say he wept. I wish never to see such a sight again. The tears of two such silly girls as Lucy and I are of little account—but, Rupert, to behold an aged man we love and respect like him, a minister of the Gospel too, in tears! It was a hard sight to bear. He did not reproach us for our silence, saying he did not see, after our promises, how we could well do otherwise. I gave your reasons about 'responsibility in the premises;' but I don't think he understood them. Is it too

late to return? The boat that carried you down can bring you back; and oh! how much rejoiced shall we all be to see you! Wherever you go and whatever you do, boys—for I write as much to one as to the other, and only address to Rupert because he so earnestly desired it—but wherever you go, and whatever you do, remember the instructions you have both received in youth, and how much all of us are interested in your conduct and happiness. Affectionately yours,

"GRACE WALLINGFORD.

"To Mr. Rupert Hardinge."

Lucy had been less guarded, and possibly a little more honest. She wrote as follows:

"DEAR MILES:—I believe I cried for one whole hour after you and Rupert left us, and, now it is all over, I am vexed at having cried so much about two such foolish fellows. Grace has told you all about my dear, dear father, who cried too. I declare, I don't know when I was so frightened! I thought it *must* bring you back, as soon as you hear of it. What will be done I do not know; but *something*, I am certain. Whenever father is in earnest he says but little. I know he is in earnest *now*. I believe Grace and I do nothing but think of you; that is, she of *you*, and I of Rupert; and a little the other way, too—so now you have the whole truth. Do not fail, on any account, to write before you go to sea, if you *do* go to sea, as I hope and trust you will not. Good-by.

"LUCY HARDINGE.

"To Mr. Miles Wallingford.

"P.S. Neb's mother protests, if the boy is not home by Saturday night, she will go after him. No such disgrace as a runaway ever befell her or hers, and she says she will not submit to it. But I suppose we shall see *him* soon, and with him *letters*."

Now Neb had taken his leave, but no letter had been trusted to his care. As often happens, I regretted the mistake when it was too late; and all that day I thought how disappointed Lucy would be, when she came to see the negro empty-handed.

Rupert and I parted in the street, as he did not wish to walk with a sailor, while in his own long togs. He did not *say* as much, but I knew him well enough to ascertain it without his speaking. I was walking very fast in the direction of the ship, and had actually reached the wharves, when, in turning a corner, I came plump upon Mr. Hardinge. My guardian was walking slowly, his face sorrowful and dejected, and his eyes fastened on every ship he passed, as if looking for his boys. He saw me, casting a vacant glance over my person; but I was so much changed by dress, and particularly by the little tarpaulin, that he did not know me. Anxiety immediately drew his look toward the vessels, and I passed him unobserved. Mr. Hardinge was walking *from*, and I *toward* the *John*, and of course all my risk terminated as soon as out of sight.

That evening I had the happiness of being under way, in a real full-rigged ship. It is true, it was under very short canvas, and merely to go into the stream. Taking advantage of a favorable wind and tide, the *John* left the wharf under her jib, main-topmast staysails, and spanker, and dropped down as low as the Battery, when she sheered into the other channel and anchored. Here I was, then, fairly at anchor in the stream, half a mile from any land but the bottom, and burning to see the ocean. That afternoon the crew came on board, a motley collection of lately drunken seamen, of whom about half were Americans, and the rest natives of as many different countries as there were men. Mr. Marble scanned them with a knowing look, and, to my surprise, he told the captain there was good stuff among them. It seems he was a better judge than I was myself, for a more unpromising set of wretches, as to looks, I never saw grouped together. A few, it is true, appeared well enough; but most of them had the air of having been dragged through—a place I will not name, though it is that which sailors usually quote when describing themselves on such occasions.

But Jack, after he has been a week at sea, and Jack coming on board to duty after a month of excess on shore, are very different creatures, morally and physically.

I now began to regret that I had not seen a little of the town. In 1797 New York could not have had more than fifty thousand inhabitants, though it was just as much of a paragon then, in the eyes of all *good* Americans, as it is to-day. It is a sound patriotic rule to maintain that *our* best is always *the* best, for it never puts us in the wrong. I have seen enough of the world since to understand that we get a great many things wrong-end foremost in this country of ours; undervaluing those advantages and excellences of which we have great reason to be proud, and boasting of others that, to say the least, are exceedingly equivocal. But it takes time to learn all this, and I have no intention of getting ahead of my story, or of my country; the last being a most suicidal act.

We received the crew of a Saturday afternoon, and half of them turned in immediately. Rupert and I had a good berth, intending to turn in and out together, during the voyage; and this made us rather indifferent to the movements of the rest of our extraordinary associates. The kid, at supper, annoyed us both a little; the notion of seeing one's food in a round *trough*, to be tumbled over and cut from by all hands, being particularly disagreeable to those who have been accustomed to plates, knives, and forks, and other such superfluities. I confess I thought of Grace's and Lucy's little white hands, and of silver sugar-tongs, and of clean plates and glasses, and table-cloths —napkins and silver forks were then unknown in America, except on the very best tables, and not always on them, unless on high-days and holidays—as we were going through the unsophisticated manipulations of this first supper. Forty-seven years have elapsed, and the whole scene is as vivid to my mind at this moment as if it occurred last night. I wished myself one of the long-snouted tribe, several times, in order to be in what is called "keeping."

I had the honor of keeping an anchor-watch in company with a grum old Swede, as we lay in the Hudson. The wind was light, and the ship had a good berth, so my associate chose a soft plank, told me to give him a call should anything happen, and lay down to sleep away his two hours in comfort. Not so with me. I strutted the deck with as much importance as if the weight of the State lay on my shoulders—paid a visit every five minutes to the bows, to see that the cable had not parted, and that the anchor did not "come home"—and then looked aloft, to ascertain that everything was in its place. Those were a happy two hours!

About ten next morning, being Sunday, and, as Mr. Marble expressed it, "the better day, the better deed," the pilot came off, and all hands were called to "up anchor." The cook, cabin-boy, Rupert, and I, were intrusted with the duty of "fleeting-jig" and breaking down the coils of the cable, the handspikes requiring heavier hands than ours. The anchor was got in without any difficulty, however, when Rupert and I were sent aloft to loose the fore-topsail. Rupert got into the top *via* the lubber's hole, I am sorry to say, and the loosing of the sail on both yardarms fell to my duty. A hand was on the fore-yard, and I was next ordered up to loose the topgallant-sail. Canvas began to fall and open all over the ship, the topsails were mast-headed, and, as I looked down from the fore-topmast cross-trees where I remained to overhaul the clew-lines, I saw that the ship was falling off, and that her sails were filling with a stiff northwest breeze.

Just as my whole being was entranced with the rapture of being under way for Canton, which was then called the Indies, Rupert called out to me from the top. He was pointing at some object on the water, and, turning, I saw a boat within a hundred feet of the ship. In her was Mr. Hardinge who at that moment caught sight of us. But the ship's sails were now all full, and no one on deck saw, or at least heeded, the boat. The *John* glided past it, and, the last I saw of

my venerated guardian, he was standing erect, bareheaded, holding both arms extended, as if entreating us not to desert him! Presently the ship fell off so much that the after-sails hid him from my view.

I descended into the top, where I found Rupert had shrunk down out of sight, looking frightened and guilty. As for myself, I got behind the head of the mast, and fairly sobbed. This lasted a few minutes, when an order from the mate called us both below. When I reached the deck the boat was already a long distance astern, and had evidently given up the idea of boarding us. I do not know whether I felt the most relieved or pained by the certainty of this fact.

CHAPTER IV.

"There is a *tide* in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows, and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat:
And we must take the *current* when it serves,
Or lose our ventures."—BRUTUS—JULIUS CÆSAR.

IN four hours from the time when Rupert and I last saw Mr. Hardinge, the ship was at sea. She crossed the bar, and started on her long journey, with a fresh northwester, and with everything packed on that she would bear. We took a diagonal course out of the bight formed by the coasts of Long Island and New Jersey, and sunk the land entirely by the middle of the afternoon. I watched the highlands of Navesink, as they vanished like watery clouds in the west, and then I felt I was at last fairly out of sight of land. But a foremast-hand has little opportunity for indulging in sentiment as he quits his native shore; and few, I fancy, have the disposition. As regards the opportunity, anchors are to be got in off the bows, and stowed; cables are to be unbent and coiled down; studding-gear is to be hauled out and got ready; frequently boom-irons are to be placed upon the yards, and the hundred preparations made, that render the work of a ship as ceaseless a round of activity as that of a house.

This kept us all busy until night, when the watches were told off and set. I was in the larboard, or chief mate's watch, having actually been chosen by that hard-featured old seaman, the fourth man he named; an honor for which I was indebted to the activity I had already manifested aloft. Rupert was less distinguished, being taken by the captain for the second mate's watch, the very last person chosen. That night Mr. Marble dropped a few hints on the subject, which let me into the secret of these two selections. "You and I will get along well together, I see that plainly, Miles," he said, "for there's quicksilver in your body. As for your friend in t'other watch, it's all as it should be; the captain has got one hand the most, and such as he is, he is welcome to him. He'll blacken more writing paper this v'y'ge, I reckon, than he'll tar down riggin'." I thought it odd, however, that Rupert, who had been so forward in all the preliminaries of our venture, should fall so far astern in its first practical results.

It is not my intention to dwell on all the minute incidents of this, my first voyage to sea, else would it spin out the narrative unnecessarily, and render my task as fatiguing to the reader as it might prove to myself. One occurrence, however, which took place three days out, must be mentioned, as it will prove to be connected with important circumstances in the end. The ship was now in order, and was at least two hundred leagues from the land, having had a famous run off the coast, when the voice of the cook, who had gone below for water, was heard down among the casks, in such a clamor as none but a black can raise, with all his loquacity awakened.

"There's *two* niggers at that work!" exclaimed Mr. Marble, after listening an instant, glancing his eye round to make certain the mulatto steward was not in the discussion. "No *one* darkey ever could make all that outcry. Bear a hand below, Miles, and see if Africa has come aboard us in the night."

I was in the act of obeying when Cato, the cook, was seen rising through the steerage-hatch, dragging after him the

dark poll of another black, whom he had gripped by the wool. In an instant both were on deck, when, to my astonishment, I discovered the agitated countenance of Nebuchadnezzar Clawbonny. Of course the secret was out, the instant the lad's glistening features were recognized.

Neb, in a word, had managed to get on board the ship before she hauled out into the stream, and lay concealed among the water-casks, his pockets crammed with ginger-bread and apples, until discovered by the cook, in one of his journeys in quest of water. The food of the lad had been gone twenty-four hours, and it is not probable the fellow could have remained concealed much longer, had not this discovery taken place. The instant he was on deck, Neb looked eagerly around to ascertain how far the ship had got from the land, and, seeing nothing but water on every side of him, he fairly grinned with delight. This exasperated Mr. Marble, who thought it was adding insult to injury, and he gave the lad a cuff on the ear that would have set a white reeling. On Neb, however, this sharp blow produced no effect, falling as it did on the impregnable part of his system.

"Oh! you're a nigger, be you?" exclaimed the mate, waxing warmer and warmer, as he fancied himself baffled by the other's powers of endurance. "Take that, and let us see if you're full-blooded!"

A smart rap on the shin accompanying these words, Neb gave in on the instant. He begged for mercy, and professed a readiness to tell all, protesting he was not "a runaway nigger"—a term the mate used while applying the kicks.

I now interfered by telling Mr. Marble, with all the respect due from a green hand to a chief mate, who Neb really was, and what I supposed to be his motives for following me to the ship. This revelation cost me a good deal in the end, the idea of Jack's having a "waiting-man" on board giving rise to a great many jokes at my expense during the rest of the voyage. Had I not been so active, and so *willing*, a great source of favor on board a ship, it is probable these jokes would have been much broader and more frequent. As it was, they annoyed me a good deal; and it required a strong exercise of all the boyish regard I really entertained for Neb, to refrain from turning-to and giving him a sound thrashing for his exploit, at the first good occasion. And yet, what was his delinquency compared to my own? He had followed his master out of deep affection, blended somewhat, it is true, with a love of adventure; while in one sense, I had violated all the ties of the heart, merely to indulge the latter passion.

The captain coming on deck, Neb's story was told, and, finding that no wages would be asked in behalf of this athletic, healthy young negro, he had no difficulty in receiving him into favor. To Neb's great delight, he was sent forward to take his share on the yards and in the rigging, there being no vacancy for him to fill about the caboose, or in the cabin. In an hour the negro was fed, and he was regularly placed in the starboard watch. I was rejoiced at this last arrangement, as it put the fellow in a watch different from my own, and prevented his officious efforts to do my work. Rupert, I discovered, however, profited often by his zeal, employing the willing black on every possible occasion. On questioning Neb, I ascertained that he had taken the boat round to the *Wallingford*, and had made use of a dollar or two, I had given him at parting, to board in a house suitable to his color, until the ship was ready for sea, when he got on board, and stowed himself among the water-casks, as mentioned.

Neb's apparition soon ceased to be a subject of discourse, and his zeal quickly made him a general favorite. Hardy, strong, resolute, and accustomed to labor, he was early of great use in all the heavy drags; and aloft, even, though less quick than a white would have been, he got to be serviceable and reasonably expert. My own progress—and I say it without vanity, but simply because it was true—was the subject of general remark. One week made me familiar with the running-gear; and, by that time, I could tell a rope by its size, the manner in which it led, and the place where it was belayed, in the darkest night, as well as the oldest sea-

man on board. It is true, my model-ship had prepared the way for much of this expertness; but free from all sea-sickness, of which I never had a moment in my life, I set about learning these things in good earnest, and was fully rewarded for my pains. I passed the weather-earing of the mizzen-topsail when we had been out a fortnight, and went to those of the fore and main before we crossed the line. The mate put me forward on all occasions, giving me much instruction in private; and the captain neglected no opportunity of giving me useful hints, or practical ideas. I asked, and was allowed, to take my regular trick at the wheel before we got into the latitude of St. Helena; and from that time did my full share of seaman's duty on board, the nicer work of knotting, splicing, etc., excepted. These last required a little more time; but I am satisfied that, in all things but judgment, a clever lad, who has a taste for the business, can make himself a very useful and respectable mariner in six months of active service.

China voyages seldom produce much incident. If the moment of sailing has been judiciously timed, the ship has fair winds much of the way, and generally moderate weather. To be sure, there are points on the long road that usually give one a taste of what the seas sometimes are; but, on the whole, a Canton voyage, though a long one, cannot be called a rough one. As a matter of course, we had gales, and squalls, and the usual vicissitudes of the ocean, to contend with, though our voyage to Canton might have been called quiet, rather than the reverse. We were four months under our canvas, and, when we anchored in the river, the clewing up of our sails, and getting from beneath their shadows, resembled the rising of a curtain on some novel scenic representation. John Chinaman, however, has been so often described, particularly of late, that I shall not dwell on his peculiarities. Sailors, as a class, are very philosophical, so far as the peculiarities and habits of strangers are concerned, appearing to think it beneath the dignity of those who visit all lands, to betray wonder at the novelties of any. It so happened that no man on board the *John*, the officers, steward and cook excepted, had ever doubled the Cape of Good Hope before this voyage; and yet our crew regarded the shorn polls, slanting eyes, long cues, clumsy dress, high cheek-bones, and lumbering shoes of the people they now saw for the first time, with just as much indifference as they would have encountered a new fashion at home. Most of them, indeed, had seen, or fancied they had seen, much stranger sights in the different countries they had visited; it being a standing rule with Jack to compress everything that is wonderful into the "last voyage"—that in which he is engaged for the present time being usually set down as commonplace, and unworthy of particular comment. On this principle, *my* Canton excursion *ought* to be full of marvels, as it was the progenitor of all that I subsequently saw and experienced as a sailor. Truth compels me to confess, notwithstanding, that it was one of the least wonderful of all the voyages I ever made, until near its close.

We lay some months in the river, getting cargo, receiving teas, nankins, silks, and other articles, as our supercargo could lay hands on them. In all this time, we saw just as much of the Chinese as it is usual for strangers to see, and not a jot more. I was much up at the factories with the captain, having charge of his boat; and, as for Rupert, he passed most of his working-hours either busy with the supercargo ashore, or writing in the cabin. I got a good insight, however, into the uses of the serving-mallet, the fid, marlinspike and winch, and did something with the needle and palm. Marble was very good to me, in spite of his nor'west face, and never let slip an occasion to give a useful hint. I believe my exertions on the outward-bound passage fully equaled expectations, and the officers had a species of pride in helping to make Captain Wallingford's son worthy of his honorable descent. I had taken occasion to let it be known that Rupert's great-grandfather had been a man-of-war captain; but the suggestion was met by a flat refusal to be-

lieve it from Mr. Kite, the second mate, though Mr. Marble remarked it *might* be so, as I admitted that both his father and grandfather had been, or were, in the Church. My friend seemed fated to achieve nothing but the glory of a "barber's clerk."

Our hatches were got on and battened down, and we sailed for home early in the spring of 1798. The ship had a good run across the China Sea, and reached the Indies in rather a short passage. We had cleared all the islands, and were fairly in the India Ocean, when an adventure occurred, which was the first really worthy of being related that we met in the whole voyage. I shall give it, in as few words as possible.

We had cleared the Straits of Sunda early in the morning, and had made a pretty fair run in the course of the day, though most of the time in thick weather. Just as the sun set, however, the horizon became clear; and we got a sight of two small sail, seemingly heading in toward the coast of Sumatra, proas by their rig and dimensions. They were so distant, and were so evidently steering for the land, that no one gave them much thought, or bestowed on them any particular attention. Proas in that quarter were usually distrusted by ships, it is true; but the sea is full of them, and far more are innocent than are guilty of any acts of violence. Then it became dark soon after these craft were seen, and night shut them in. An hour after the sun had set, the wind fell to a light air, that just kept steerage-way on the ship. Fortunately, the *John* was not only fast, but she minded her helm, as a light-footed girl turns in a lively dance. I never was in a better steering ship, most especially in moderate weather.

Mr. Marble had the middle watch that night, and, of course, I was on deck from midnight until four in the morning. It proved misty most of the watch, and for quite an hour we had a light drizzling rain. The ship the whole time was close-hauled, carrying royals. As everybody seemed to have made up his mind to a quiet night, one without any reefing or furling, most of the watch were sleeping about the decks, or wherever they could get good quarters and be least in the way. I do not know what kept me awake, for lads of my age are apt to get all the sleep they can; but I believe I was thinking of Clawbonny, and Grace, and Lucy; for the latter, excellent girl as she was, often crossed my mind in those days of youth and comparative innocence. Awake I was, and walking in the weather gangway, in a sailor's trot. Mr. Marble, he I do believe was fairly snoozing on the hen-coops, being, like the sails, as one might say, barely "asleep." At that moment I heard a noise, one familiar to seamen; that of an oar falling in a boat. So completely was my mind bent on other and distant scenes, that at first I felt no surprise, as if we were in a harbor surrounded by craft of various sizes, coming and going at all hours. But a second thought destroyed this illusion, and I looked eagerly about me. Directly on our weather-bow, distant, perhaps, a cable's length, I saw a small sail, and I could distinguish it sufficiently well to perceive it was a proa. I sang out, "Sail ho! and close aboard!"

Mr. Marble was on his feet in an instant. He afterward told me that when he opened his eyes, for he admitted this much to me in confidence, they fell directly on the stranger. He was too much of a seaman to require a second look in order to ascertain what was to be done. "Keep the ship away—keep her broad off!" he called out to the man at the wheel. "Lay the yards square—call all hands, one of you. Captain Robbins, Mr. Kite, bear a hand up; the bloody proas are aboard us!" The last part of this call was uttered in a loud voice, with the speaker's head down the companionway. It was heard plainly enough below, but scarcely at all on deck.

In the meantime everybody was in motion. It is amazing how soon sailors are wide awake when there is really anything to do! It appeared to me that all our people mustered on deck in less than a minute, most of them with nothing on but their shirts and trousers. The ship was

nearly before the wind by the time I heard the captain's voice; and then Mr. Kite came bustling in among us forward, ordering most of the men to lay aft to the braces, remaining himself on the forecastle, and keeping me with him to let go the sheets. On the forecastle, the strange sail was no longer visible, being now abaft the beam; but I could hear Mr. Marble swearing there were two of them, and that they must be the very chaps we had seen to leeward, and standing in for the land at sunset. I also heard the captain calling out to the steward to bring him a powder-horn. Immediately after, orders were given to let fly all our sheets forward, and then I perceived that they were wearing ship. Nothing saved us but the prompt order of Mr. Marble to keep the ship away, by which means, instead of moving toward the proas, we instantly began to move from them. Although they went three feet to our two, this gave us a moment of breathing time.

As our sheets were all flying forward, and remained so for a few minutes, it gave me leisure to look about. I soon saw both proas, and glad enough was I to perceive that they had not approached materially nearer. Mr. Kite observed this also, and remarked that our movements had been so prompt as to "take the rascals aback." He meant they did not exactly know what we were at, and had not kept away with us.

At this instant, the captain and five or six of the oldest seamen began to cast loose all our starboard, or weather guns, four in all, and sixes. We had loaded these guns in the Straits of Banca, with grape and canister, in readiness for just such pirates as were now coming down upon us; and nothing was wanting but the priming and a hot loggerhead. It seems two of the last had been ordered in the fire, when we saw the proas at sunset, and they were now in excellent condition for service, live coals being kept around them all night by command. I saw a cluster of men busy with the second gun from forward, and could distinguish the captain pointing it.

"There cannot well be any mistake, Mr. Marble?" the captain observed, hesitating whether to fire or not.

"Mistake, sir? Lord, Captain Robbins, you might cannonade any of the islands astern for a week, and never hurt an honest man. Let 'em have it, sir; I'll answer for it, you do good."

This settled the matter. The loggerhead was applied, and one of our sixes spoke out in a smart report. A breathless stillness succeeded. The proas did not alter their course, but neared us fast. The captain leveled his night-glass, and I heard him tell Kite, in a low voice, that they were full of men. The word was now passed to clear away all the guns, and to open the arm-chest, to come at the muskets and pistols. I heard the rattling of the boarding-pikes, too, as they were cut adrift from the spanker-boom, and fell upon the deck. All this sounded very ominous, and I began to think we should have a desperate engagement first, and then have all our throats cut afterward.

I expected now to hear the guns discharged in quick succession, but they were got ready only, not fired. Kite went aft, and returned with three or four muskets, and as many pikes. He gave the latter to those of the people who had nothing to do with the guns. By this time the ship was on a wind, steering a good full, while the two proas were just abeam, and closing fast. The stillness that reigned on both sides was like that of death. The proas, however, fell a little more astern; the result of their own maneuvering, out of all doubt, as they moved through the water much faster than the ship, seeming desirous of dropping into our wake, with a design of closing under our stern, and avoiding our broadside. As this would never do, and the wind freshened so as to give us four or five knot way, a most fortunate circumstance for us, the captain determined to tack while he had room. The *John* behaved beautifully, and came round like a top. The proas saw there was no time to lose, and attempted to close before we could fill again; and this they would have done with ninety-nine ships in a hundred. The

captain knew his vessel, however, and did not let her lose her way, making everything draw again as it might be by instinct. The proas tacked, too, and, laying up much nearer to the wind than we did, appeared as if about to close on our lee-bow. The question was, now, whether we could pass them or not before they got near enough to grapple. If the pirates got on board us, we were hopelessly gone; and everything depended on coolness and judgment. The captain behaved perfectly well in this critical instant, commanding a dead silence, and the closest attention to his orders.

I was too much interested at this moment to feel the concern that I might otherwise have experienced. On the forecastle, it appeared to us all that we should be boarded in a minute, for one of the proas was actually within a hundred feet, though losing her advantage a little by getting under the lee of our sails. Kite had ordered us to muster forward of the rigging, to meet the expected leap with a discharge of muskets, and then to present our pikes, when I felt an arm thrown around my body, and was turned inboard, while another person assumed my place. This was Neb, who had thus coolly thrust himself before me, in order to meet the danger first. I felt vexed, even while touched with the fellow's attachment and self-devotion, but had no time to betray either feeling before the crews of the proas gave a yell, and discharged some fifty or sixty matchlocks at us. The air was full of bullets, but they all went over our heads. Not a soul on board the *John* was hurt. On our side, we gave the gentlemen the four sixes, two at the nearest and two at the sternmost proa, which was still near a cable's length distant. As often happens, the one seemingly furthest from danger, fared the worst. Our grape and canister had room to scatter, and I can at this distant day still hear the shrieks that arose from that craft! They were like the yells of fiends in anguish. The effect on that proa was instantaneous; instead of keeping on after her consort, she wore short round on her heel, and stood away in our wake, on the other tack, apparently to get out of the range of our fire.

I doubt if we touched a man in the nearest proa. At any rate, no noise proceeded from her, and she came up under our bows fast. As every gun was discharged, and there was not time to load them, all now depended on repelling the boarders. Part of our people mustered in the waist where it was expected the proa would fall alongside, and part on the forecastle. Just as this distribution was made, the pirates cast their grapnel. It was admirably thrown, but caught only by a ratlin. I saw this, and was about to jump into the rigging to try what I could do to clear it, when Neb again went ahead of me, and cut the ratlin with his knife. This was just as the pirates had abandoned sails and oars, and had risen to haul up alongside. So sudden was the release, that twenty of them fell over by their own efforts. In this state the ship passed ahead, all her canvas being full, leaving the proa motionless in her wake. In passing, however, the two vessels were so near, that those aft in the *John* distinctly saw the swarthy faces of their enemies.

We were no sooner clear of the proas than the order was given, "ready about!" The helm was put down, and the ship came into the wind in a minute. As we came square with the two proas, all our larboard guns were given to them, and this ended the affair. I think the nearest of the rascals got it this time, for away she went, after her consort, both running off toward the islands. We made a little show of chasing, but it was only a feint; for we were too glad to get away from them, to be in earnest. In ten minutes after we tacked the last time, we ceased firing, having thrown some eight or ten round-shot after the proas, and were close-hauled again, heading to the southwest.

It is not to be supposed we went to sleep again immediately. Neb was the only man on board who did, but he never missed an occasion to eat or sleep. The captain praised us, and, as a matter of course in that day, he called all hands to "splice the main-brace." After this, the watch was told to go below, as regularly

as if nothing had happened. As for the captain himself, he and Mr. Marble and Mr. Kite went prying about the ship to ascertain if anything material had been cut by what the chief mate called "the bloody Indian matchlocks." A little running-rigging had suffered, and we had to reeve a few new ropes in the morning; but this terminated the affair.

I need hardly say, all hands of us were exceedingly proud of our exploit. Everybody was praised but Neb, who, being a "nigger," was in some way or other overlooked. I mentioned his courage and readiness to Mr. Marble, but I could excite in no one else the same respect for the poor fellow's conduct that I certainly felt myself. I have since lived long enough to know that as the gold of the rich attracts to itself the gold of the poor, so do the deeds of the unknown go to swell the fame of the known. This is as true of nations, and races, and families, as it is of individuals; poor Neb belonging to a proscribed color, it was not in reason to suppose he could ever acquire exactly the same credit as a white man.

"Them darkeys do sometimes blunder on a lucky idee," answered Mr. Marble to one of my earnest representations, "and I've known chaps among 'em that were almost as knowing as dullish whites; but everything out of the common way with 'em is pretty much chance. As for Neb, however, I will say this for him: that, for a nigger, he takes things quicker than any of his color I ever sailed with. Then he has no sa'ce, and that is a good deal with a black. White sa'ce is bad enough; but that of a nigger is unbearable."

Alas! Neb. Born in' slavery, accustomed to consider it arrogance to think of receiving even his food until the meanest white has satisfied his appetite, submissive, unrepining, laborious, and obedient—the highest eulogium that all these patient and unobtrusive qualities could obtain, was a reluctant acknowledgment that he had "no sa'ce." His quickness and courage saved the *John*, nevertheless; and I have always said it, and ever shall.

A day after the affair of the proas, all hands of us began to brag. Even the captain was a little seized with this mania; and, as for Marble, he was taken so badly, that, had I not known he behaved well in the emergency, I certainly should have set him down as a Boabdil. Rupert manifested this feeling, too, though I heard he did his duty that night. The result of all the talk was to convert the affair into a very heroic exploit; and it subsequently figured in the journals as one of the deeds that illustrate the American name.

From the time we were rid of the proas, the ship got along famously until we were as far west as about 52°, when the wind came light from the southward and westward, with thick weather. The captain had been two or three times caught in here, and he took it into his head that the currents would prove more favorable, could he stand in closer to the coast of Madagascar than common. Accordingly, we brought the ship on a bowline, and headed well up to the northward and westward. We were a week on this tack, making from fifty to a hundred miles a day, expecting hourly to see the land. At length we made it, enormously high mountains, apparently a long distance from us, though, as we afterward ascertained, a long distance inland: and we continued to near it. The captain had a theory of his own about the currents of this part of the ocean, and, having set one of the peaks by compass, at the time the land was seen, he soon convinced himself, and everybody else whom he tried to persuade, Marble excepted, that we were setting to windward with visible speed. Captain Robbins was a well-meaning, but somewhat dull man; and, when dull men become theorists, they usually make sad work with the practice.

All that night we stood on to the northward and westward, though Mr. Marble had ventured a remonstrance concerning a certain headland that was just visible, a little on our weather-bow. The captain snapped his fingers at this, however; laying down a course of reasoning which, if it were worth anything, ought to have convinced the mate that the weatherly set of the current would carry us ten leagues to the southward and westward

of that cape before morning. On this assurance we prepared to pass a quiet and comfortable night.

I had the morning watch, and when I came on deck, at four, there was no change in the weather. Mr. Marble soon appeared, and he walked into the waist, where I was leaning on the weather-rail, and fell into discourse. This he often did, sometimes so far forgetting the difference in our stations *afloat*—not *ashore; there* I had considerably the advantage of him—as occasionally to call me "sir." I always paid for this inadvertency, however, it usually putting a stop to the communications, for the time being. In one instance he took such prompt revenge for this implied admission of equality, as literally to break off short in the discourse, and to order me, in his sharpest key, to go aloft and send some studding-sails on deck, though they all had to be sent aloft again and set, in the course of the same watch. But offended dignity is seldom considerate, and not always consistent.

"A quiet night, Master Miles"—*this* the mate *could* call me, as it implied superiority on his part—"a quiet night, Master Miles," commenced Mr. Marble, "and a strong westerly current, accordin' to Captain Robbins. Well, to my taste, gooseberries are better than currents, and *I'd* go about. That's my manner of *generalizing*."

"The captain, I suppose, sir, from that, is of a different opinion?"

"Why, yes, somewhatish—though I don't think he knows himself exactly what his own opinion is. This is the third v'y'ge I've sailed with the old gentleman, and he is half his time in a fog or a current. Now it's his idee the ocean is full of Mississippi rivers, and if one could only find the head of a stream, he might go round the world in it. More particularly does he hold that there is no fear of the land when in a current, as a stream never sets on shore. For my part, I never want any better hand-lead than my nose."

"Nose, Mr. Marble?"

"Yes, nose, Master Miles. Haven't you remarked how far we smelt the Injees, as we went through the islands?"

"It is true, sir, the Spice Islands, and all land, they say——"

"What the devil's that?" asked the mate, evidently startled at something he *heard*, though he appeared to *smell* nothing, unless, indeed, it might be a rat.

"It sounds like water washing on rocks, sir, as much as anything I ever heard in my life!"

"Ready about!" shouted the mate. "Run down and call the captain, Miles—hard a-lee—start everybody up, forward."

A scene of confusion followed, in the midst of which the captain, second mate, and the watch below, appeared on deck. Captain Robbins took command, of course, and was in time to haul the after-yards, the ship coming round slowly in so light a wind. Come round she did, however, and, when her head was fairly to the southward and eastward, the captain demanded an explanation. Mr. Marble did not feel disposed to trust his nose any longer, but he invited the captain to use his ears. This all hands did, and, if sounds could be trusted, we had a pretty lot of breakers seemingly all around us.

"We surely can go out the way we came in, Mr. Marble!" said the captain, anxiously.

"Yes, sir, if there were no *current*; but one never knows where a bloody current will carry him in the dark."

"Stand by to let go the anchor!" cried the captain. "Let run and clew up, forward and aft. Let go as soon as you're ready, Mr. Kite."

Luckily, we had kept a cable bent as we came through the straits, and, not knowing but we might touch at the Isle of France, it was still bent, with the anchor fished. We had talked of stowing the latter in-board, but, having land in sight, it was not done. In two minutes, it was a-cock-bill, and, in two more, let go. None knew whether we should find a bottom; but Kite soon sung out to "snub," the anchor being down, with only six fathoms out. The lead corroborated this, and we had the comfortable assurance of being not only among breakers, but just near the coast. The holding-ground, how-

ever, was reported good, and we went to work and rolled up all our rags. In half an hour the ship was snug, riding by the stream, with a strong current, or tide, setting exactly northeast, or directly opposite to the captain's theory. As soon as Mr. Marble had ascertained this fact I overheard him grumbling about something, of which I could distinctly understand nothing but the words "bloody cape —bloody current."

CHAPTER V.

"They hurried us aboard a bark;
Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared
A rotten carcass of a boat, not rigg'd,
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast: the very rats
Instinctively had girt us."—TEMPEST.

THE hour that succeeded in the calm of expectation, was one of the most disquieting of my life. As soon as the ship was secured, and there no longer remained anything to do, the stillness of death reigned among us; the faculties of every man and boy appeared to be absorbed in the single sense of hearing—the best, and indeed the only, means we then possessed of judging of our situation. It was now apparent that we were near some place or places where the surf was breaking on land; and the hollow, not-to-be-mistaken bellowings of the element, too plainly indicated that cavities in rocks frequently received, and as often rejected, the washing waters. Nor did these portentous sounds come from one quarter only, but they seemed to surround us; now reached our ears from the known direction of the land, now from the south, the northeast, and, in fact, from every direction. There were instances when these moanings of the ocean sounded as if close under our stern, and then again they came from some point within a fearful proximity to the bows.

Happily the wind was light, and the ship rode with a moderate strain on the cable, so as to relieve us from the apprehension of immediate destruction. There was a long heavy ground-swell rolling in from the southwest, but, the lead giving us eight fathoms, the sea did not break exactly where we lay; though the sullen washing that came to our ears, from time to time, gave unerring notice that it was doing so quite near us, independently of the places where it broke upon the rocks. At one time the captain's impatience was so goading that he had determined to pull round the anchorage in a boat, in order to anticipate the approach of light; but a suggestion from Mr. Marble that he might unconsciously pull into a roller, and capsize, induced him to wait for day.

The dawn appeared at last, after two or three of the longest hours I remember ever to have passed. Never shall I forget the species of furious eagerness with which we gazed about us. In the first place, we got an outline of the adjacent land; then, as light diffused itself more and more into the atmosphere, we caught glimpses of its details. It was soon certain we were within a cable's length of perpendicular cliffs of several hundred feet in height, into whose caverns the sea poured at times, producing those frightful, hollow moanings that an experienced ear can never mistake. This cliff extended for leagues in both directions, rendering drowning nearly inevitable to the shipwrecked mariner on that inhospitable coast. Ahead, astern, outside of us, and I might almost say all around us, became visible, one after another, detached ledges, breakers and ripples; so many proofs of the manner in which Providence had guided us through the hours of darkness.

By the time the sun appeared, for, happily, the day proved bright and clear, we had obtained pretty tolerable notions of the critical situation in which we were placed by means of the captain's theory of currents. The very cape that we were to drift past, lay some ten leagues nearly dead to windward, as the breeze then was; while to leeward, far as the eye could reach, stretched the same inhospitable barrier of rock as that which lay on our starboard quarter and beam. Such was my first introduction to the island of Madagascar; a portion of the world of

which, considering its position, magnitude and production, the mariners of Christendom probably know less than of any other. At the time of which I am writing, far less had been learned of this vast country than is known to-day, though the knowledge of even our own immediate contemporaries is of an exceedingly limited character.

Now that the day had returned, the sun was shining on us cheerfully, and the sea looked tranquil and assuring, the captain became more pacified. He had discretion enough to understand that time and examination were indispensable to moving the ship with safety; and he took the wise course of ordering the people to get their breakfasts, before he set us at work. The hour that was thus employed forward, was passed aft in examining the appearance of the water, and the positions of the reefs around the ship. By the time we were through, the captain had swallowed his cup of coffee and eaten his biscuit; and, calling away four of the most athletic oarsmen, he got into the jolly-boat, and set out on the all-important duty of discovering a channel seaward. The lead was kept moving, and I shall leave the party thus employed for an hour or more, while we turn our attention in-board.

Marble beckoned me aft, as soon as Captain Robbins was in the boat, apparently with a desire to say something in private. I understood the meaning of his eye, and followed him down into the steerage, where all that was left of the ship's water was now stowed, that on deck having been already used. The mate had a certain consciousness about him that induced great caution, and he would not open his lips until he had rummaged about below some time, affecting to look for a set of blocks that might be wanted for some purpose or other, on deck. When this had lasted a little time, he turned short round to me, and let out the secret of the whole maneuver.

"I'll tell you what, Master Miles," he said, making a sign with a finger to be cautious, "I look upon this ship's berth as worse than that of a city scavenger. We've plenty of water all round us, and plenty of rocks too. If we knew the way back, there is no wind to carry us through it, among these bloody currents, and there's no harm in getting ready for the worst. So you get Neb and the gentleman"—Rupert was generally thus styled in the ship—"and clear away the launch first. Get everything out of it that don't belong there; after which, do you put these breakers in, and wait for further orders. Make no fuss, putting all upon orders, and leave the rest to me."

I complied, of course, and in a few minutes the launch was clear. While busy, however, Mr. Kite came past, and desired to know "what are you at there?" I told him 'twas Mr. Marble's orders, and the latter gave his own explanation of the matter.

"The launch may be wanted," he said, "for I've no notion that jolly-boat will do to go out as far as we shall find it necessary to sound. So I am about to ballast the launch, and get her sails ready; there's no use in mincing matters in such a berth as this."

Kite approved of the idea, and even went so far as to suggest that it might be well enough to get the launch into the water at once, by way of saving time. The proposition was too agreeable to be rejected, and, to own the truth, all hands went to work to get up the tackles with a will, as it is called. In half an hour the boat was floating alongside the ship. Some said she would certainly be wanted to carry out the stream-anchor, if for nothing else; others observed that half a dozen boats would not be enough to find all the channel we wanted; while Marble kept his eye, always in an underhand way, on his main object. The breakers we got in and stowed, filled with *fresh* water, by way of ballast. The masts were stepped, the oars were put on board, and a spare compass was passed down, lest the ship might be lost in the thick weather, of which there was so much, just in that quarter of the world. All this was said and done so quietly that nobody took the alarm; and when the mate called out in a loud voice, "Miles, pass a bread-bag filled and some cold grub into

that launch—the men may be hungry before they get back," no one seemed to think more was meant than was thus openly expressed. I had my private orders, however, and managed to get quite a hundred-weight of good cabin biscuit into the launch, while the cook was directed to fill his coppers with pork. I got some of the latter *raw* into the boat, too; *raw* pork being food that sailors in no manner disdain. They say it eats like chestnuts.

In the meantime, the captain was busy in his exploring expedition, on the return from which he appeared to think he was better rewarded than has certainly fallen to the lot of others employed on another expedition which bears the same name. He was absent near two hours, and, when he got back, it was to renew his theory of what Mr. Marble called his "bloody currents."

"I've got behind the curtain, Mr. Marble," commenced Captain Robbins, before he was fairly alongside of the ship again, whereupon Marble muttered, "ay! ay! you've got behind the rocks too." "It's all owing to an eddy that is made in-shore by the main current, and we have stretched a *leetle* too far in."

Even I thought to myself, what would have become of us had we stretched a *leetle* further in! The captain, however, seemed satisfied that he could carry the ship out, and as this was all we wanted, no one was disposed to be very critical. A word was said about the launch, which the mate had ordered to be dropped astern, out of the way, and the explanation seemed to mystify the captain. In the meanwhile, the pork was boiling furiously in the coppers.

All hands were now called to get the anchor up. Rupert and I went aloft to loosen sails, and we stayed there until the royals were mast-headed. In a very few minutes the cable was up and down, and then came the critical part of the whole affair. The wind was still very light, and it was a question whether the ship could be carried past a reef of rocks that now began to show itself above water, and on which the long, heavy rollers, that came undulating from the southwestern Atlantic, broke with a sullen violence that betrayed how powerful was the ocean, even in its moments of slumbering peacefulness. The rising and falling of its surface was like that of some monster's chest, as he respired heavily in sleep.

Even the captain hesitated about letting go his hold of the bottom, with so strong a set of the water to leeward, and in so light a breeze. There was a sort of bight on our starboard bow, however, and Mr. Marble suggested it might be well to sound in that direction, as the water appeared smooth and deep. To him it looked as if there were really an eddy in-shore, which might hawse the ship up to windward six or eight times her length, and thus more than meet the loss that must infallibly occur in first casting her head to seaward. The captain admitted the justice of this suggestion, and I was one of those who were told to go in the jolly-boat on this occasion. We pulled in toward the cliffs, and had not gone fifty yards before we struck an eddy, sure enough, which was quite as strong as the current in which the ship lay. This was a great advantage, and so much the more, because the water was of sufficient depth, quite up to the edge of the reef which formed the bight, and thus produced the change in the direction of the set. There was plenty of room, too, to handle the ship in, and, all things considered, the discovery was extremely fortunate. In the bottom of this bight we should have gone ashore, the previous night, had not our ears been so much better than our noses.

As soon as certain of the facts, the captain pulled back to the ship, and gladdened the hearts of all on board with the tidings. We now manned the handspikes cheerily, and began to heave. I shall never forget the impression made on me by the rapid drift of the ship, as soon as the anchor was off the bottom, and her bows were cast in-shore, in order to fill the sails. The land was so near that I noticed this drift by the rocks, and my heart was fairly in my mouth for a few seconds. But the *John* worked beautiful-

ly, and soon gathered away. Her bows did not strike the eddy, however, until we got fearful evidence of the strength of the true current, which had set us down nearly as low as the reef outside, to windward of which it was indispensable for us to pass. Marble saw all this, and he whispered to me to tell the cook to pass the pork into the launch at once—not to mind whether it were particularly well done, or not. I obeyed, and had to tend the foresheet myself, for my pains, when the order was given to "ready about."

The eddy proved a true friend, but it did not carry us up much higher than the place where we had anchored, when it became necessary to tack. This was done in season, on account of our ignorance of all the soundings, and we had soon got the *John's* head off-shore again. Drawing a short distance ahead, the main-topsail was thrown aback, and the ship allowed to drift. In proper time it was filled, and we got round once more, looking into the bight. The maneuver was repeated, and this brought us up fairly under the lee of the reef, and just in the position we desired to be. It was a nervous instant, I make no doubt, when Captain Robbins determined to trust the ship in the true current, and run the gauntlet of the rocks. The passage across which we had to steer, before we could possibly weather the nearest reef, was about a cable's length in width, and the wind would barely let us lay high enough to take it at right angles. Then the air was so light, that I almost despaired of our doing anything.

Captain Robbins put the ship into the current with great judgment. She was kept a rap-full until near the edge of the eddy, and then her helm was put nearly down, all at once. But for the current's acting, in one direction, on her starboard bow, and the eddy's passing in the other, on the larboard quarter, the vessel would have been taken aback; but these counteracting forces brought her handsomely on her course again, and that in a way to prevent her falling an inch to leeward.

Now came the trial. The ship was kept a rap-full, and she went steadily across the passage, favored, perhaps, by a little more breeze than had blown most of the morning. Still, our leeward set was fearful, and, as we approached the reef, I gave all up. Marble screwed his lips together, and his eyes never turned from the weather-leeches of the sails. Everybody appeared to me to be holding his breath, as the ship rose on the long ground-swells, sending slowly ahead the whole time. We passed the nearest point of the rocks on one of the rounded risings of the water, just touching lightly as we glided by the visible danger. The blow was light, and gave little cause for alarm. Captain Robbins now caught Marble by the hand, and was in the very act of heartily shaking it, when the ship came down very much in the manner that a man unexpectedly lights on a stone, when he has no idea of having anything within two or three yards of his feet. The blow was tremendous, throwing half the crew down; at the same instant, all three of the topmasts went to leeward.

One has some difficulty in giving a reader accurate notions of the confusion of so awful a scene. The motion of the vessel was arrested suddenly, as it might be by a wall, and the whole fabric seemed to be shaken to dissolution. The very next roller that came in, which would have undulated in toward the land but for us, meeting with so large a body in its way, piled up and broke upon our decks, covering everything with water. At the same time, the hull lifted, and, aided by wind, sea and current, it set still further on the reef, thumping in a way to break strong iron bolts, like so many sticks of sealing-wax, and cracking the solid live oak of the floor-timbers as if they were made of willow. The captain stood aghast! For one moment despair was painfully depicted in his countenance; then he recovered his self-possession and seamanship. He gave the order to stand by to carry out to windward the stream-anchor in the launch, and to send a kedge to haul out by, in the jolly-boat. Marble answered with the usual "ay, ay, sir!" but before he sent us into the boats, he ventured to suggest that the ship had

bilged already. He had heard timbers crack, about which he thought there could be no mistake. The pumps were sounded, and the ship had seven feet of water in her hold. This had made in about ten minutes. Still the captain would not give her up. He ordered us to commence throwing the teas overboard, in order to ascertain, if possible, the extent of the injury. A place was broken out in the wake of the main-hatch, and a passage was opened down into the lower hold, where we met the water. In the meantime, a South-Sea man we had picked up at Canton dove down under the lee of the bilge of the ship. He soon came back and reported that a piece of sharp rock had gone quite through the planks. Everything tending to corroborate this, the captain called a council of all hands on the quarter-deck, to consult as to further measures.

A merchantman has no claim on the services of her crew after she is hopelessly wrecked. The last have a lien in law on the ship and cargo for their wages; and it is justly determined that when this security fails, the claim for services ends. It followed, of course, that as soon as the *John* was given over we were all our own masters; and hence the necessity for bringing even Neb into the consultation. With a vessel-of-war it would have been different. In such a case the United States pays for the service, ship or no ship, wreck or no wreck; and the seaman serves out his term of enlistment, be this longer or shorter. Military discipline continues under all circumstances.

Captain Robbins could hardly speak when we gathered round him on the forecastle, the seas breaking over the quarter-deck in a way to render that sanctuary a very uncomfortable berth. As soon as he could command himself, he told us that the ship was hopelessly lost. How it had happened he could not very well explain himself, though he ascribed it to the fact that the currents did not run in the direction in which, according to all sound reasoning, they ought to run. This part of the speech was not perfectly lucid, though, as I understood our unfortunate captain, the laws of Nature, owing to some inexplicable influence, had departed, in some way or other, from their ordinary workings expressly to wreck the *John*. If this were not the meaning of what he said, I did not understand this part of the address.

The captain was much more explicit after he got out of the current. He told us that the island of Bourbon was only about four hundred miles from where we then were, and he thought it possible to go that distance, find some small craft, and come back, and still save part of the cargo, the sails, anchors, etc., etc. We might make such a trip of it as would give us all a lift, in the way of salvage, that might prove some compensation for our other losses. This sounded well, and it had at least the effect to give us some present object for our exertions; it also made the danger we all ran of losing our lives less apparent. To land on the island of Madagascar, in that day, was out of the question. The people were then believed to be far less civilized than in truth they were, and had a particularly bad character among mariners. Nothing remained, therefore, but to rig the boats, and make immediate dispositions for our departure.

Now it was that we found the advantage of the preparations already made. Little remained to be done, and that which was done was much better done than if we had waited until the wreck was half full of water, and the seas were combing in upon her. The captain took charge of the launch, putting Mr. Marble, Rupert, Neb, myself, and the cook into the jolly-boat, with orders to keep as close as possible to himself. Both boats had sails, and both were so arranged as to row in calms, or head winds. We took in rather more than our share of provisions and water, having two skillful caterers in the chief mate and cook; and, having obtained a compass, quadrant, and a chart for our portion of the indispensables, all hands were ready for a start in about two hours after the ship had struck.

It was just noon when we cast off from the wreck, and stood directly off the land. According to our calculations, the wind

enabled us to run with a clean full, on our true course. As the boats drew out into the ocean, we had abundant opportunities of discovering how many dangers we had escaped; and, for my own part, I felt deeply grateful, even then, as I was going out upon the wide Atlantic in a mere shell of a boat, at the mercy we had experienced. No sooner were we fairly in deep water, than the captain and mate had a dialogue on the subject of the currents again. Notwithstanding all the difficulties his old theory had brought him into, the former remained of opinion that the true current set to windward, and that we should so find it as soon as we got a little into the offing; while the mate was frank enough to say he had been of opinion, all along, that it ran the other way. The latter added that Bourbon was rather a small spot to steer for, and it might be better to get into its longitude, and then find it by meridian observations, than to make any more speculations about matters of which we knew nothing.

The captain and Mr. Marble saw things differently, and we kept away accordingly, when we ought to have luffed all we could. Fortunately the weather continued moderate, or our little boat would have had a bad time of it. We outsailed the launch with ease, and were forced to reef in order not to part company. When the sun set, we were more than twenty miles from the land, seeing no more of the coast, though the mountains inland were still looming up grandly in the distance. I confess, when night shut in upon us, and I found myself on the wide ocean, in a boat much smaller than that with which I used to navigate the Hudson, running every minute further and further into the watery waste, I began to think of Clawbonny, and its security, and quiet nights, and well-spread board, and comfortable beds, in a way I had never thought of either before. As for food, however, we were not stinted; Mr. Marble setting us an example of using our teeth on the half-boiled pork, that did credit to his philosophy. To do this man justice, he seemed to think a run of four hundred miles in a jolly-boat no great matter, but took everything as regularly as if still on the deck of the *John*. Each of us got as good a nap as our cramped situations would allow.

The wind freshened in the morning, and the sea began to break. This made it necessary to keep still more away, to prevent filling at times, or to haul close up, which might have done equally well. But the captain preferred the latter course, on account of the current. We had ticklish work of it, in the jolly-boat, more than once that day, and were compelled to carry a whole sail in order to keep up with the launch, which beat us, now the wind had increased. Marble was a terrible fellow to carry on everything, ship or boat, and we kept our station admirably, the two boats never getting a cable's length asunder, and running most of the time within hail of each other. As night approached, however, a consultation was held on the subject of keeping in company. We had not been out thirty hours, and had made near a hundred and fifty miles, by our calculation. Luckily the wind had got to be nearly west, and we were running ahead famously, though it was as much as we could do to keep the jolly-boat from filling. One hand was kept bailing most of the time, and sometimes all four of us were busy. These matters were talked over, and the captain proposed abandoning the jolly-boat altogether, and to take us into the launch, though there was not much vacant space to receive us. But the mate resisted this, answering that he thought he could take care of our boat a while longer, at least. Accordingly, the old arrangement was maintained, the party endeavoring to keep as near together as possible.

About midnight it began to blow in squalls, and two or three times we found it necessary to take in our sails, out oars, and pull the boat head to sea, in order to prevent her swamping. The consequence was, that we lost sight of the launch, and, though we always kept away to our course as soon as the puffs would allow, when the sun rose we saw nothing of our late companions. I have sometimes thought Mr. Marble parted company on purpose, though he seemed much concerned next

morning when he ascertained the launch was nowhere to be seen. After looking about for an hour, and the wind moderating, we made sail close on the wind; a direction that would soon have taken us away from the launch, had the latter been close alongside when we first took it. We made good progress all this day, and at evening, having now been out fifty-four hours, we supposed ourselves to be rather more than half way on the road to our haven. It fell calm in the night, and the next morning we got the wind right aft. This gave us a famous shove, for we sometimes made six and seven knots in the hour. The fair wind lasted thirty hours, during which time we must have made more than a hundred and fifty miles, it falling nearly calm about an hour before dawn, on the morning of the fourth day out. Everybody was anxious to see the horizon that morning, and every eye was turned to the east, with intense expectation, as the sun rose. It was in vain; there was not the least sign of land visible.

Marble looked sadly disappointed, but he endeavored to cheer us up with the hope of seeing the island shortly. We were then heading due east, with a very light breeze from the northwest. I happened to stand up in the boat, on a thwart, and, turning my face to the southward, I caught a glimpse of something that seemed like a hummock of land in that quarter. I saw it but for an instant, but, whatever it was, I saw it plain enough. Mr. Marble now got on the thwart, and looked in vain to catch the same object. He said there was no land in that quarter —*could* be none—and resumed his seat to steer to the eastward, a little north. I could not be easy, however, but remained on the thwart until the boat lifted on a swell higher than common, and then I saw the brown, hazy-looking spot on the margin of the ocean again. My protestations now became so earnest that Marble consented to stand for an hour in the direction I pointed out to him. "One hour, boy, I will grant you, to shut your mouth," the mate said, taking out his watch, "and that you need lay nothing to my door hereafter." To make the most of this hour, I got my companions at the oars, and we all pulled with hearty good-will. So much importance did I attach to every fathom of distance made, that we did not rise from our seats until the mate told us to stop rowing, for the hour was up. As for himself, he had not risen either, but kept looking behind him to the eastward, still hoping to see land somewhere in that quarter.

My heart beat violently as I got upon the thwart, but there lay my hazy object, now never dipping at all. I shouted "Land ho!" Marble jumped upon a thwart, too, and no longer disputed my word. It was land, he admitted, and it must be the island of Bourbon, which we had passed to the northward, and must soon have given a hopelessly wide berth. We went to the oars again with renewed life, and soon made the boat spin. All that day we kept rowing, until about five in the afternoon, when we found ourselves within a few leagues of the island of Bourbon, where we were met by a fresh breeze from the southward, and were compelled to make sail. The wind was dead on end, and we made stretches under the lee of the island, going about as we found the sea getting to be too heavy for us, as was invariably the case whenever we got too far east or west. In a word, a lee was fast becoming necessary. By ten, we were within a mile of the shore, but saw no place where we thought it safe to attempt a landing in the dark; a long, heavy sea setting in round both sides of the island, though the water did not break much where we remained. At length the wind got to be so heavy that we could not carry even our sail double-reefed, and we kept two oars pulling lightly in, relieving each other every hour. By daylight it blew tremendously, and glad enough were we to find a little cove where it was possible to get ashore. I had then never felt so grateful to Providence as I did when I got my feet on *terra firma*.

We remained on the island a week, hoping to see the launch and her crew; but neither appeared. Then we got a passage to the Isle of France, on arriving at which

place we found the late gale was considered to have been very serious. There was no American consul in the island, at that time; and Mr. Marble, totally without credit or means, found it impossible to obtain a craft of any sort to go to the wreck in. We were without money, too, and a homeward-bound Calcutta vessel coming in, we joined her to work our passages home, Mr. Marble as dickey, and the rest of us in the forecastle. This vessel was called the *Tigris*, and belonged to Philadelphia. She was considered one of the best ships out of America, and her master had a high reputation for seamanship and activity. He was a little man of the name of Digges, and was under thirty at the time I first knew him. He took us on board purely out of a national feeling, for his ship was strong-handed without us, having thirty-two souls, all told, when he received us five. We afterward learned that letters sent after the ship had induced Captain Digges to get five additional hands in Calcutta, in order to be able to meet the picaroons that were then beginning to plunder American vessels, even on their own coast, under the pretense of their having violated certain regulations made by the two great belligerents of the day, in Europe. This was just the commencement of the *quasi* war which broke out a few weeks later with France.

Of all these hostile symptoms, however, I then knew little and cared less. Even Mr. Marble had never heard of them, and we five joined the *Tigris* merely to get passages home, without entertaining second thoughts of running any risks further than the ordinary dangers of the seas.

The *Tigris* sailed the day we joined her, which was the third after we reached Mauritius, and just fifteen days after we had left the wreck. We went to sea with the wind at the southward, and had a good run off the island, making more than a hundred miles that afternoon and in the course of the night. Next morning, early, I had the watch, and order was given to set topgallant studding-sails. Rupert and I had got into the same watch on board this vessel, and we both went aloft to reeve the gear. I had taken up the end of the halyards, and had reeved them, and had overhauled the end down, when, in raising my head, I saw two small lug-sails on the ocean, broad on our weather-bow, which I recognized in an instant for those of the *John's* launch. I cannot express the feeling that came over me at that sight. I yelled, rather than shouted, "Sail ho!" and then, pushing in, I caught hold of a royal-backstay, and was on deck in an instant. I believe I made frantic gestures to windward, for Mr. Marble, who had the watch, had to shake me sharply before I could let the fact be known.

As soon as Marble comprehended me, and got the bearings of the boat, he hauled down all the studding-sails, braced sharp up on a wind, set the mainsail, and then sent down a report to Captain Digges for orders. Our new commander was a humane man, and having been told our whole story, he did not hesitate about confirming all that had been done. As the people in the launch had made out the ship some time before I saw the boat, the latter was running down upon us, and, in about an hour, the tiny sails were descried from the deck. In less than an hour after this, our main-yard swung round, throwing the topsail aback, and the well-known launch of the *John* rounded-to close under our lee; a rope was thrown, and the boat was hauled alongside.

Everybody in the *Tigris* was shocked when we came to get a look at the condition of the strangers. One man, a powerful negro, lay dead in the bottom of the boat; the body having been kept for a dreadful alternative, in the event of his companions falling in with no other relief.

Three more of the men were nearly gone, and had to be whipped on board as so many lifeless bales of goods. Captain Robbins and Kite, both athletic, active men, resembled specters, their eyes standing out of their heads as if thrust from their sockets by some internal foe; and when we spoke to them, they all seemed unable to answer. It was not fasting or want of food, that had reduced them to

this state, so much as want of water. It is true, they had no more bread left than would keep body and soul together for a few hours longer; but of water they had tasted not a drop for seventy odd hours! It appeared that, during the gale, they had been compelled to empty the breakers to lighten the boat, reserving only one for their immediate wants. By some mistake the one reserved was nearly half empty at the time; and Captain Robbins believed himself then so near Bourbon, as not to go on an allowance until it was too late. In this condition had they been searching for the island quite ten days, passing it, but never hitting it. The winds had not favored them, and, the last few days, the weather had been such as to admit of no observation. Consequently, they had been as much out of their reckoning in their latitude as in their longitude.

A gleam of intelligence, and I thought of pleasure, shot athwart the countenance of Captain Robbins, as I helped him over the *Tigris's* side. He saw I was safe. He tottered as he walked, and leaned heavily on me for support. I was about to lead him aft, but his eye caught sight of a scuttle-but, and the tin-pot on its head. Thither he went, and stretched out a trembling hand to the vessel. I gave him the pot as it was, with about a wine-glass of water in it. This he swallowed at a gulp, and then tottered forward for more. By this time Captain Digges joined us, and gave the proper directions how to proceed. All the sufferers had water in small quantities given them, and it is wonderful with what expressions of delight they received the grateful beverage. As soon as they understood the necessity of keeping it as long as possible in their mouths, and on their tongues, before swallowing it, a little did them a great deal of good. After this, we gave them some coffee, the breakfast being ready, and then a little ship's biscuit soaked in wine. By such means every man was saved, though it was near a month before all were themselves again. As for Captain Robbins and Kite, they were enabled to attend to duty by the end of a week, though nothing more was exacted of them than they chose to perform.

CHAPTER VI.

"The yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up."—MACBETH.

POOR Captain Robbins! No sooner did he regain his bodily strength than he began to endure the pain of mind that was inseparable from the loss of his ship. Marble, who, now that he had fallen to the humbler condition of a second mate, was more than usually disposed to be communicative with me, gave me to understand that our old superior had at first sounded Captain Digges on the subject of proceeding to the wreck, in order to ascertain what could be saved; but the latter had soon convinced him that a first-rate Philadelphia Indiaman had something else to do besides turning wrecker. After a pretty broad hint to this effect, the *John* and all that was in her were abandoned to their fate. Marble, however, was of opinion that the gale in which the launch came so near being lost must have broken the ship entirely to pieces, giving her fragments to the ocean. We never heard of her fate or recovered a single article that belonged to her.

Many were the discussions between Captain Robbins and his two mates, touching the error in reckoning that had led them so far from their course. In that day, navigation was by no means as simple a thing as it has since become. It is true, lunars were usually attempted in India and China ships; but this was not an everyday affair, like the present morning and afternoon observations to obtain the time, and, by means of the chronometer, the longitude. Then we had so recently got clear of the islands as to have no great need of any extraordinary headwork; and the "bloody currents" had acted their pleasure with us for eight or ten days before the loss of the ship. Marble was a very good navigator, one of the best I ever sailed with, in spite of the plainness of his exterior and his rough deportment; and, all things considered,

he treated his old commander with great delicacy, promising to do all he could when he got home to clear the matter up. As for Kite, he knew but little, and had the discretion to say but little. This moderation rendered our passage all the more agreeable.

The *Tigris* was a very fast ship, besides being well found. She was a little larger than the *John*, and mounted twelve guns, nine-pounders. In consequence of the additions made to her crew, one way and another, she now mustered nearer fifty than forty souls on board. Captain Digges had certain martial tastes, and long before we were up with the cape, he had us all quartered and exercised at the guns. He, too, had had an affair with some proas, and he loved to converse of the thrashing he had given the rascals. I thought he envied us our exploit, though this might have been mere imagination on my part, for he was liberal enough in his commendations. The private intelligence he had received of the relations between France and America quickened his natural impulses; and, by the time we reached St. Helena, the ship might have been said to be in good fighting order for a merchantman. We touched at this last-mentioned island for supplies, but obtained no news of any interest. Those who supplied the ship could tell us nothing but the names of the Indiamen who had gone out and home for the last twelvemonth, and the prices of fresh meat and vegetables. Napoleon civilized them seventeen years later.

We had a good run from St. Helena to the calm latitudes, but these last proved calmer than common. We worried through them after a while, however, and then did very well until we got in the latitude of the Windward Islands. Marble one day remarked to me that Captain Digges was standing closer to the French island of Gaudeloupe than was at all necessary or prudent if he believed in his own reports of the danger there existed to American commerce in this quarter of the ocean.

I have lived long enough, and have seen too much of men and things to fancy my country and countrymen right in all their transactions, merely because newspapers, members of Congress, and Fourth of July orators are pleased to affirm the doctrine. No one can go much to sea without reading with great distrust many of the accounts in the journals of that day of the grievous wrongs done the commerce of America by the authorities of this or that port, the seizure of such a ship, or the imprisonment of some particular set of officers and men. As a rule, it is safer to assume that the afflicted parties deserve all that has happened to them, than to believe them immaculate; and quite likely much more too. The habit of receiving such appeals to their sympathies renders the good people of the Republic peculiarly liable to impositions of this nature; and the mother who encourages those of her children who fetch and carry will be certain to have her ears filled with complaints and tattle. Nevertheless, it is a fact beyond all dispute, that the commerce of the country was terribly depredated on by nearly all the European belligerents between the commencement of the war of the French Revolution and its close. So enormous were the robberies thus committed on the widely-extended trade of this nation, under one pretense or another, as to give a coloring of retributive justice, if not of moral right, to the recent failures of certain States among us to pay their debts. Providence singularly avenges all wrongs by its unerring course; and I doubt not, if the facts could be sifted to the bottom, it would be found the devil was not permitted to do his work in either case without using the materials supplied by the sufferers in some direct or indirect manner themselves.

Of all the depredations on American trade just mentioned, those of the great sister republic, at the close of the last century, were among the most grievous, and were of a character so atrocious and bold, that I confess it militates somewhat against my theory to admit that France owns very little of the "suspended debt;" but I account for this last circumstance

by the reparation she in part made by the treaty of 1831. With England it is different. She drove us into a war by the effects of her orders in council and paper blockades, and compelled us to expend a hundred millions to set matters right. I should like to see the books balanced, not by the devil, who equally instigated the robberies on the high seas, and the "suspension" or "repudiation" of the State debts; but by the great accountant who keeps a record of all our deeds of this nature, whether it be to take money by means of cruising ships, or cruising scrip. It is true these rovers encountered very differently-looking victims in the first place; but it is a somewhat trite remark, that the aggregate of human beings is pretty much the same in all situations. There were widows and orphans as much connected with the condemnation of prizes as with the prices of condemned stock; and I do not see that fraud is any worse when carried on by scriveners and clerks with quills behind their ears than when carried on by gentlemen wearing cocked hats and carrying swords by their sides. On the whole, I am far from certain that the account-current of honesty is not slightly —honesty very *slightly* leavens either transaction—in favor of the non-paying States, as men do sometimes borrow with good intentions, and fail, from inability, to pay; whereas, in the whole course of my experience, I never knew a captor of a ship who intended to give back any of the prize-money if he could help it. But to return to my adventures.

We were exactly in the latitude of Guadeloupe, with the usual breeze, when, at daylight, a rakish-looking brig was seen in chase. Captain Digges took a long survey of the stranger with his best glass —one that was never exhibited but on state occasions—and then he pronounced him to be a French cruiser; most probably a privateer. That he was a Frenchman, Marble affirmed, was apparent by the height of his topmasts and the shortness of his yards; the upper spars in particular, being mere apologies for yards. Everybody who had any right to an opinion, was satisfied the brig was a French cruiser, either public or private.

The *Tigris* was a fast ship, and she was under topmast and topgallant studdingsails at the time, going about seven knots. The brig was on an easy bowline, evidently looking up for our wake, edging off gradually as we drew ahead. She went about nine knots, and bade fair to close with us by noon. There was a good deal of doubt, aft, as to the course we ought to pursue. It was decided in the end, however, to shorten sail and let the brig come up, as being less subject to cavils, than to seem to avoid her. Captain Digges got out his last letters from home, and I saw him showing them to Captain Robbins, the two conning them over with great earnestness. I was sent to do some duty near the hen-coops, where they were sitting, and overheard a part of their conversation. From the discourse, I gathered that the proceedings of these picaroons were often equivocal, and that Americans were generally left in doubt, until a favorable moment occurred for the semi-pirates to effect their purposes. The party assailed did not know when or how to defend himself, until it was too late.

"These chaps come aboard you, sometimes, before you're aware of what they are about," observed Captain Robbins.

"I'll not be taken by surprise in that fashion," returned Digges, after a moment of reflection. "Here, you Miles, go forward and tell the cook to fill his coppers with water, and to set it boiling as fast as he can; and tell Mr. Marble I want him aft. Bear a hand, now, youngster, and give them a lift yourself."

Of course I obeyed, wondering what the captain wanted with so much hot water as to let the people eat their dinners off cold grub, rather than dispense with it; for this was a consequence of his decree. But we had not got the coppers half filled, before I saw Mr. Marble and Neb lowering a small ship's engine from the launch, and placing it near the galley, in readiness to be filled. The mate told Neb to screw on the pipe, and then half a dozen of the men, as soon as we got through with the coppers, were told to

fill the engine with sea water. Captain Digges now came forward to superintend the exercise, and Neb jumped on the engine, flourishing the pipe about with the delight of a "nigger." The captain was diverted with the black's zeal, and he appointed him captain of the firemen on the spot.

"Now let us see what you can do at that forward dead-eye, darkey," said Captain Digges, laughing. "Take it directly on the strap. Play away, boys, and let Neb try his hand."

It happened that Neb hit the dead-eye at the first jet, and he showed great readiness in turning the stream from point to point, as ordered. Neb's conduct on the night of the affair with the proas had been told to Captain Digges, who was so well pleased with the fellow's present dexterity, as to confirm him in office. He was told to stick by the engine at every hazard. Soon after, an order was given to clear for action. This had an ominous sound to my young ears, and, though I have no reason to suppose myself deficient in firmness, I confess I began to think again of Clawbonny, and Grace, and Lucy; ay, and even of the mill. This lasted but for a moment, however, and, as soon as I got at work, the feeling gave me no trouble. We were an hour getting the ship ready, and, by that time, the brig was within half a mile, luffing fairly up on our lee-quarter. As we had shortened sail, the privateer manifested no intention of throwing a shot to make us heave-to. She seemed disposed to extend courtesy for courtesy.

The next order was for all hands to go to quarters. I was stationed in the maintop, and Rupert in the fore. Our duties were to do light work, in the way of repairing damages; and the captain, understanding that we were both accustomed to firearms, gave us a musket apiece, with orders to blaze away as soon as they began the work below. As we had both stood fire once, we thought ourselves veterans, and proceeded to our stations, smiling and nodding to each other as we went up the rigging. Of the two, my station was the best, since I could see the approach of the brig, the mizzen-topsail offering but little obstruction to vision after she got near; whereas the maintopsail was a perfect curtain, so far as poor Rupert was concerned. In the way of danger, there was not much difference as to any of the stations on board, the bulwarks of the ship being little more than plank that would hardly stop a musket ball; and then the French had a reputation for firing into the rigging.

As soon as all was ready, the captain sternly ordered silence. By this time the brig was near enough to hail. I could see her decks quite plainly, and they were filled with men. I counted her guns, too, and ascertained she had but ten, all of which seemed to be lighter than our own. One circumstance that I observed, however, was suspicious. Her forecastle was crowded with men, who appeared to be crouching behind the bulwarks, as if anxious to conceal their presence from the eyes of those in the *Tigris*. I had a mind to jump on a backstay and slip down on deck, to let this threatening appearance be known; but I had heard some sayings touching the imperative duty of remaining at quarters in face of the enemy, and I did not like to desert my station. Tyros have always exaggerated notions, both of their rights and their duties, and I had not escaped the weakness. Still, I think some credit is due for the alternative adopted. During the whole voyage I had kept a reckoning, and paper and pencils were always in my pocket, in readiness to catch a moment to finish a day's work. I wrote as follows on a piece of paper, therefore, as fast as possible, and dropped the billet on the quarter-deck, by inclosing a copper in the scrawl, *cents* then being in their infancy. I had merely written, "The brig's forecastle is filled with armed men, hid behind the bulwarks!" Captain Digges heard the fall of the copper, and looking up—nothing takes an officer's eyes aloft quicker than to find anything coming out of a top!—he saw me pointing to the paper. I was rewarded for this liberty by an approving nod. Captain Digges read what I had written, and I soon observed Neb and the

cook filling the engine with boiling water. This job was no sooner done than a good place was selected on the quarter-deck for this singular implement of war, and then a hail came from the brig.

"Vat zat sheep is?" demanded some one from the brig.

"The *Tigris* of Philadelphia, from Calcutta *home*. What brig is *that?*"

"*La Folie—corsair Francais.* From vair you come?"

"From Calcutta. And where are *you* from?"

"Guadeloupe. Vair you go, eh?"

"Philadelphia. Do not lug so near me; some accident may happen."

"Vat you call '*accident?*' Can nevair hear, eh? I will come *tout près.*"

"Give us a wider berth, I tell you! Here is your jib-boom nearly foul of my mizzen-rigging."

"Vat mean zat, bert' vidair? eh! *Allons, mes enfants, c'est le moment!*"

"Luff a little, and keep his spar clear," cried our captain. "Squirt away, Neb, and let us see what you can do!"

The engine made a movement, just as the French began to run out on their bowsprit, and, by the time six or eight were on the heel of the jib-boom, they were met by the hissing hot stream, which took them *en echelon,* as it might be, fairly raking the whole line. The effect was instantaneous. Physical nature cannot stand excessive heat, unless particularly well supplied with skin; and the three leading Frenchmen, finding retreat impossible, dropped incontinently into the sea, preferring cold water to hot—the chances of drowning, to the certainty of being scalded. I believe all three were saved by their companions in-board, but I will not vouch for the fact. The remainder of the intended boarders, having the bowsprit before them, scrambled back upon the brig's forecastle as well as they could, betraying, by the random way in which their hands flew about, that they had a perfect consciousness how much they left their rear exposed on the retreat. A hearty laugh was heard on all parts of the *Tigris,* and the brig, putting her helm hard up, wore round like a top, as if she were scalded herself.*

We all expected a broadside now; but of that there was little apprehension, as it was pretty certain we carried the heaviest battery, and had men enough to work it. But the brig did not fire, I suppose, because we fell off a little ourselves, and she perceived it might prove a losing game. On the contrary, she went quite round on her heel, hauling up on the other tack far enough to bring the two vessels exactly *dos à dos.* Captain Digges ordered two of the quarter-deck nines to be run out of the sternports; and it was well he did, for it was not in nature for men to be treated as our friends in the brig had been served, without manifesting certain signs of ill-humor. The vessels might have been three cables' length asunder when we got a gun. The first I knew of a shot was to hear it plunge through the mizzen-topsail, then it came whistling through my top, between the weather-rigging and the mast-head, cutting a hole through the main-topsail, and, proceeding onward, I heard it strike something more solid than canvas. I thought of Rupert and the foretop in an instant, and looked anxiously down on deck to ascertain if he were injured.

"Foretop there!" called out Captain Digges. "Where did that shot strike?"

"In the mast-head," answered Rupert, in a clear, firm voice. "It has done no damage, sir."

"Now's your time, Captain Robbins—give 'em a reminder."

Both our nines were fired, and a few seconds after, three cheers arose from the decks of our ship. I could not see the brig, now, for the mizzen-topsail; but I afterward learned that we had shot away her gaff. This terminated the combat, in which the glory was acquired principally by Neb. They told me, when I got down among the people again, that the black's face had been dilated with delight the whole time, though he stood fairly exposed to musketry, his mouth grinning from

* This incident actually occurred in the war of 1798.

ear to ear. Neb was justly elated with the success that attended this exhibition of his skill, and described the retreat of our enemies with a humor and relish that raised many a laugh at the discomfited privateersman. It is certain that some of the fellows must have been nearly parboiled.

I have always supposed this affair between *La Folie* and the *Tigris* to have been the actual commencement of hostilities in the *quasi* war of 1798–99 and 1800. Other occurrences soon supplanted it in the public mind, but we of the ship never ceased to regard the adventure as one of great national interest. It did prove to be a nine days' wonder in the newspapers.

From this time nothing worthy of being noted occurred until we reached the coast. We had got as high as the capes of Virginia, and were running in for the land, with a fair wind, when we made a ship inshore of us. The stranger hauled up to speak us as soon as we were seen. There was a good deal of discussion about this vessel, as she drew near, between Captain Digges and his chief mate. The latter said he knew the vessel, and that it was an Indiaman out of Philadelphia, called the *Ganges*, a sort of sister craft to our own ship; while the former maintained, if it were the *Ganges* at all, she was so altered as scarcely to be recognized. As we got near, the stranger threw a shot under our fore-foot, and showed an American pennant and ensign. Getting a better look at her, we got so many signs of a vessel-of-war in our neighbor, as to think it wisest to heave-to, when the other vessel passed under our stern, tacked, and lay with her head-yards aback, a little on our weather-quarter. As she drew to windward, we saw her stern, which had certain national emblems, but no name on it. This settled the matter. She was a man-of-war, and she carried the American flag! Such a thing did not exist a few months before, when we left home, and Captain Digges was burning with impatience to know more. He was soon gratified.

"Is not that the *Tigris*?" demanded a voice, through a trumpet, from the stranger.

"Ay, ay! What ship is that?"

"The United States ship *Ganges*, Captain Dale; from the capes of the Delaware, bound on a cruise. You're welcome home, Captain Digges; we may want some of your assistance under a cockade."

Digges gave a long whistle, and then the mystery was out. This proved to be the *Ganges*, as stated, an Indiaman bought into a new navy, and the first ship-of-war ever sent to sea under the government of the country as it had existed since the adoption of the Constitution nine years before. The privateers of France had driven the republic into an armament, and ships were fitting out in considerable numbers; some being purchased, like the *Ganges*, and others built expressly for the new marine. Captain Digges went on board the *Ganges*, and, pulling an oar in his boat, I had a chance of seeing that vessel also. Captain Dale, a compact, strongly-built, seaman-like looking man, in a blue and white uniform, received our skipper with a cordial shake of the hand, for they had once sailed together, and he laughed heartily when he heard the story of the boarding party and the hot water. This respectable officer had no braggadocio about him, but he intimated that it would not be long, as he thought, before the rovers among the islands would have their hands full. Congress was in earnest, and the whole country was fairly aroused. Whenever that happens in America, it is usually to take a new and better direction than to follow the ordinary blind impulses of popular feelings. In countries where the masses count for nothing, in the everyday working of their systems, excitement has a tendency to democracy; but among ourselves, I think the effect of such a condition of things is to bring into action men of qualities that are commonly of little account, and to elevate, instead of depressing, public sentiment.

I was extremely pleased with the manly, benevolent countenance of Captain Dale, and had a desire to ask leave to join his ship on the spot. If that impulse had been followed, it is probable my future life would have been very different from what

it subsequently proved. I should have been rated a midshipman, of course, and, serving so early, with a good deal of experience already in ships, a year or two would have made me a lieutenant, and, could I have survived the pruning of 1801, I should now have been one of the oldest officers in the service. Providence directed otherwise; and how much was lost, or how much gained, by my continuance in the *Tigris*, the reader will learn as we proceed.

As soon as Captain Digges had taken a glass or two of wine with his old acquaintance, we returned to our own ship, and the two vessels made sail; the *Ganges* standing off to the northward and eastward, while we ran in for the capes of the Delaware. We got in under Cape May, or within five miles of it, the same evening, when it fell nearly calm. A pilot came off from the cape in a row-boat, and he reached us just at dark. Captain Robbins now became all impatient to land, as it was of importance to him to be the bearer of his own bad news. Accordingly, an arrangement having been made with the two men who belonged to the shore-boat, our old commander, Rupert and myself prepared to leave the ship, late as it was. We two lads were taken for the purpose of manning two additional oars, but were to rejoin the ship in the bay, if possible; if not, up at town. One of the inducements of Captain Robbins to be off was the signs of northerly weather. It had begun to blow a little in puffs from the northwest; and everybody knew, if it came on to blow seriously from that quarter, the ship might be a week in getting up the river, her news being certain to precede her. We hurried off accordingly, taking nothing with us but a change of linen, and a few necessary papers.

We got the first real blast from the northwest in less than five minutes after we had quitted the *Tigris's* side, and while the ship was still visible, or, rather, while we could yet see the lights in her cabin windows, as she fell off before the wind. Presently the lights disappeared, owing, no doubt, to the ship's luffing again. The symptoms now looked so threatening, that the pilot's men proposed making an effort, before it was too late, to find the ship; but this was far easier said than done. The vessel might be spinning away toward Cape Henlopen, at the rate of six or seven knots; and, without the means of making any signal in the dark, it was impossible to overtake her. I do believe that Captain Robbins would have acceded to the request of the men, had he seen any probability of succeeding; as it was, there remained no alternative but to pull in, and endeavor to reach the land. We had the light on the cape as our beacon, and the boat's head was kept directly for it, as the wisest course for us to pursue.

Changes of wind from southeast to northwest are very common on the American coast. They are almost always sudden; sometimes so much so as to take ships aback; and the force of the breeze usually comes so early, as to have produced the saying that a "nor'wester comes butt-end foremost." Such proved to be the fact in our case. In less than half an hour after it began to blow, the wind would have brought the most gallant ship that floated to double-reefed topsails, steering by, and to reasonably short canvas, running large. We may have pulled a mile in this half hour, though it was by means of a quick stroke and great labor. The Cape May men were vigorous and experienced, and they did wonders; nor were Rupert and I idle; but, as soon as the sea got up, it was as much as all four of us could do to keep steerage-way on the boat. There were ten minutes, during which I really think the boat was kept head to sea by means of the wash of the waves that drove past, as we barely held her stationary.

Of course it was out of the question to continue exertions that were as useless as they were exhausting. We tried the expedient, however, of edging to the northward, with the hope of getting more under the lee of the land, and, consequently, into smoother water; but it did no good. The nearest we ever got to the light must have considerably exceeded a league. At length Rupert, totally exhausted, dropped

his oar, and fell panting on the thwart. He was directed to steer, Captain Robbins taking his place. I can only liken our situation at that fearful moment to the danger of a man who is clinging to a cliff, its summit and safety almost in reach of his hand, with the consciousness that his powers are fast failing him, and that he must shortly go down. It is true, death was not so certain by our abandoning the effort to reach the land, but the hope of being saved was faint indeed. Behind us lay the vast and angry Atlantic, without an inch of visible land between us and the Rock of Lisbon. We were totally without food of any sort, though, luckily, there was a small breaker of fresh water in the boat. The Cape May men had brought off their suppers with them, but they had made the meal; whereas the rest of us had left the *Tigris* fasting, intending to make comfortable suppers at the light.

At length Captain Robbins consulted the boatmen, and asked them what they thought of our situation. I sat between these men, who had been remarkably silent the whole time, pulling like giants. Both were young, though, as I afterward learned, both were married; each having a wife at that anxious moment waiting on the beach of the cape for the return of the boat. As Captain Robbins put the question, I turned my head, and saw that the man behind me, the oldest of the two, was in tears. I cannot describe the shock I experienced at this sight. Here was a man accustomed to hardships and dangers, who was making the stoutest and most manly efforts to save himself and all with him at the very moment, so strongly impressed with the danger of our situation that his feelings broke forth in a way it is always startling to witness, when the grief of man is thus exhibited in tears. The imagination of this husband was doubtless picturing to his mind the anguish of his wife at that moment, and, perhaps, the long days of sorrow that were to succeed. I have no idea he thought of himself, apart from his wife; for a finer, more manly, resolute fellow never existed, as he subsequently proved to the fullest extent.

It seemed to me that the two Cape May men had a sort of desperate reluctance to give up the hope of reaching the land. We were a strong boat's crew, and we had a capital, though a light boat; yet all would not do. About midnight, after pulling desperately for three hours, my strength was quite gone, and I had to give up the oar. Captain Robbins confessed himself in a very little better state, and, it being impossible for the boatmen to do more than to keep the boat stationary, and that only for a little time longer, there remained no expedient but to keep off before the wind, in the hope of still falling in with the ship. We knew that the *Tigris* was on the starboard tack when we left her, and, as she would certainly endeavor to keep as close in with the land as possible, there was a remaining chance that she had wore ship to keep off Henlopen, and might be heading up about north-northeast, and laying athwart the mouth of the bay. This left us just a chance—a ray of hope; and it had now become absolutely necessary to endeavor to profit by it.

The two Cape May men pulled the boat round, and kept her just ahead of the seas, as far as it was in their power; very light touches of the oars sufficing for this where it could be done at all. Occasionally, however, one of those chasing waves would come after us at a racer's speed, invariably breaking at such instants, and frequently half filling the boat. This gave us new employment, Rupert and myself being kept quite half the time bailing. No occupation, notwithstanding the danger, could prevent me from looking about the caldron of angry waters, in quest of the ship. Fifty times did I fancy I saw her, and as often did the delusive idea end in disappointment. The waste of dark waters, relieved by the gleaming of the combing seas, alone met the senses. The wind blew directly down the estuary, and, in crossing its mouth, we found too much swell to receive it on our beam, and were soon compelled, most reluctantly though it was, to keep dead away to prevent swamping. This painful state of expectation may have lasted half an hour, the

boat sometimes seeming ready to fly out of the water, as it drifted before the gale, when Rupert unexpectedly called out that he saw the ship.

There she was, sure enough, with her head to the northward and eastward, struggling along through the raging waters, under her fore and main-topsails, close-reefed, and reefed courses, evidently clinging to the land as close as she could, both to hold her own and to make good weather. It was barely light enough to ascertain these facts, though the ship was not a cable's length from us when first discovered. Unfortunately, she was dead to leeward of us, and was drawing ahead so fast as to leave the probability she would forereach upon us, unless we took to all our oars. This was done as soon as possible, and away we went, at a rapid rate, aiming to shoot directly beneath the *Tigris's* lee-quarter, so as to round-to under shelter of her hull, there to receive a rope.

We pulled like giants. Three several times the water slapped into us, rendering the boat more and more heavy; but Captain Robbins told us to pull on, every moment being precious. As I did not look round—*could* not well, indeed—I saw no more of the ship until I got a sudden glimpse of her dark hull, within a hundred feet of us, surging ahead in the manner in which vessels at sea seem to take sudden starts that carry them forward at twice their former apparent speed. Captain Robbins had begun to hail, the instant he thought himself near enough, or at the distance of a hundred yards, but what was the human voice amid the music of the winds striking the various cords, and I may add *chords*, in the maze of a square-rigged vessel's hamper, accompanied by the base of the roaring ocean! Heavens! what a feeling of despair was that, when the novel thought suggested itself almost simultaneously to our minds, that we should not make ourselves heard! I say simultaneously, for at the same instant the whole five of us set up a common, desperate shout to alarm those who were so near us, and who might easily save us from the most dreadful of all deaths—starvation at sea. I presume the fearful manner in which we struggled at the oars diminished the effect of our voices, while the effort to raise a noise lessened our power with the oars. We were already to leeward of the ship, though nearly in her wake, and our only chance now was to overtake her. The captain called out to us to pull for life or death, and pull we did. So frantic were our efforts, that I really think we should have succeeded, had not the sea come on board us, and filled us to the thwarts. There remained no alternative but to keep dead away, and to bail for our lives.

I confess I felt scalding tears gush down my cheeks, as I gazed at the dark mass of the ship just before it was swallowed up in the gloom. This soon occurred, and then, I make no doubt, every man in the boat considered himself as hopelessly lost. We continued to bail, notwithstanding; and, using hats, gourds, pots and pails, soon cleared the boat, though it was done with no other seeming object than to avert immediate death. I heard one of the Cape May men pray. The name of his wife mingled with his petitions to God. As for poor Captain Robbins, who had so recently been in another scene of equal danger in a boat, he remained silent, seemingly submissive to the decrees of Providence.

In this state we must have drifted a league dead before the wind, the Cape May men keeping their eyes on the light, which was just sinking behind the horizon, while the rest of us were gazing seaward in ominous expectation of what awaited us in that direction, when the hail of "boat ahoy!" sounded like the last trumpet in our ears. A schooner was passing our track, keeping a little off, and got so near as to allow us to be seen, though, owing to a remark about the light which drew all eyes to windward, not a soul of us saw her. It was too late to avert the blow, for the hail had hardly reached us, when the schooner's cut-water came down upon our little craft, and buried it in the sea as if it had been lead. At such moments men do not think, but act. I caught at a bobstay,

and missed it. As I went down into the water, my hand fell upon some object to which I clung, and, the schooner rising at the next instant, I was grasped by the hair by one of the vessel's men. I had hold of one of the Cape May men's legs. Released from my weight, this man was soon in the vessel's head, and he helped to save me. When we got in-board, and mustered our party, it was found that all had been saved but Captain Robbins. The schooner wore round, and actually passed over the wreck of the boat a second time; but our old commander was never heard of more!

CHAPTER VII.

"Oh! forget not the hour, when through forest and vale
We returned with our chief to his dear native halls!
Through the woody Sierra there sigh'd not a gale,
And the moonbeam was bright on his battlement walls;
And nature lay sleeping in calmness and light,
Round the house of the *truants*, that rose on our sight."—MRS. HEMANS.

WE had fallen on board an eastern coaster called the *Martha Wallis*, bound from James River to Boston, intending to cross the shoals. Her watch had seen us, because the coasters generally keep better lookouts than Indiamen; the latter, accustomed to good offings, having a trick of letting their people go to sleep in the night-watches. I made a calculation of the turns on board the *Tigris*, and knew it was Mr. Marble's watch when we passed the ship; and I make no question he was, at that very moment, nodding on the hen-coops—a sort of trick he had. I cannot even now understand, however, why the man at the wheel did not hear the outcry we made. To me it appeared loud enough to reach the land.

Sailors ordinarily receive wrecked mariners kindly. Our treatment on board the *Martha Wallis* was all I could have desired, and the captain promised to put us on board the first coaster she should fall in with, bound to New York. He was as good as his word, though not until more than a week had elapsed. It fell calm as soon as the northwester blew its pipe out, and we did not get into the Vineyard Sound for nine days. Here we met a craft the skipper knew, and, being a regular Boston and New York coaster, we were put on board her, with a recommendation to good treatmet. The people of the *Lovely Lass* received us just as we had been received on board the *Martha Wallis;* all hands of us living aft and eating codfish, good beef and pork, with duff (dough) and molasses, almost *ad libitum*. From this last vessel we learned all the latest news of the French war, and how things were going on in the country. The fourth day after we were put on board this craft, Rupert and I landed near Peck Slip, New York, with nothing on earth in our possession, but just in what we stood. This, however, gave us but little concern—I had abundance at home, and Rupert was certain of being free from want, both through me and through his father.

I had never parted with the gold given me by Lucy, however. When we got into the boat to land at the cape, I had put on the belt in which I kept this little treasure and it was still round my body. I had kept it as a sort of memorial of the dear girl who had given it to me; but I now saw the means of making it useful, without disposing of it altogether. I knew that the wisest course, in all difficulties, was to go at once to headquarters. I asked the address of the firm that owned, or rather *had* owned the *John*, and proceeded to the counting-house forthwith. I told my story, but found that Kite had been before me. It seems that the *Tigris* got a fair wind, three days after the blow, that carried her up to the very wharves of Philadelphia, when most of the *John's* people had come on to New York without delay. By communications with the shore at the cape, the pilot had learned that his boat had never returned, and our loss was supposed to have inevitably occurred. The accounts of all this were in the papers, and I began to fear that the distressing tidings might have reached Clawbonny. Indeed, there were little obituary notices of Rupert and myself in the journals, inserted by some hand piously employed, I

should think, by Mr. Kite. We were tenderly treated, considering our *escapade;* and *my* fortune and prospects were dwelt on with some touches of eloquence that might have been spared.

In that day, however, a newspaper was a very different thing from what it has since become. Then journals were created merely to meet the demand, and news was given as it actually occurred; whereas, now, the competition has produced a change that any one can appreciate, when it is remembered to what a *competition in news* must infallibly lead. In that day our own journals had not taken to imitating the worst features of the English newspapers—talents and education are not yet cheap enough in America to enable them to imitate the best—and the citizen was supposed to have some rights, as put in opposition to the press. The public sense of right had not become blinded by familiarity with abuses, and the miserable and craven apology was never heard for not enforcing the laws, that nobody cares for what the newspapers say. Owing to these causes, I escaped a thousand lies about myself, my history, my disposition, character and acts. Still, I was in print; and I confess it half frightened me to see my death announced in such obvious letters, although I had physical evidence of being alive and well!

The owners questioned me closely about the manner in which the *John* was lost, and expressed themselves satisfied with my answers. I then produced my half-joes, and asked to borrow something less than their amount on their security. To the latter part of the proposition, however, these gentlemen would not listen, forcing a check for a hundred dollars on me, desiring that the money might be paid at my own convenience. Knowing I had Clawbonny and a very comfortable income under my lee, I made no scruples about accepting the sum, and took my leave.

Rupert and I had now the means of equipping ourselves neatly, though always in sailor guise. After this was done we proceeded to the Albany basin, in order to ascertain whether the *Wallingford* were down or not. At the basin we learned that the sloop had gone out that very afternoon, having on board a black with his young master's effects; a lad who was said to have been out to Canton with young Mr. Wallingford, and who was now on his way home to report all the sad occurrences to the family in Ulster. This, then, was Neb, who had got thus far back in charge of our chests, and was about to return to slavery.

We had been in hopes that we might possibly reach Clawbonny before the tidings of our loss. This intelligence was likely to defeat the expectation; but, luckily, one of the fastest sloops on the river, a Hudson packet, was on the point of sailing, and, though the wind held well to the northward, her master thought he should be able to turn up with the tides as high as our creek, in the course of the next eight-and-forty hours. This was quite as much as the *Wallingford* could do, I felt well persuaded; and, making a bargain to be landed on the western shore, Rupert and I put our things on board this packet, and were under way in half an hour's time.

So strong was my own anxiety, I could not keep off the deck until we had anchored on account of the flood; and much did I envy Rupert, who had coolly turned in as soon as it was dark, and went to sleep. When the anchor was down, I endeavored to imitate his example. On turning out next morning, I found the vessel in Newburg Bay, with a fair wind. About twelve o'clock I could see the mouth of the creek, and the *Wallingford* fairly entering it, her sails disappearing behind the trees just as I caught sight of them. As no other craft of her size ever went up to that landing, I could not be mistaken in the vessel.

By getting ashore half a mile above the creek, there was a farm-road that would lead to the house by a cut so short as nearly to bring us there as soon as Neb could possibly arrive with his dire, but false intelligence. The place was pointed out to the captain, who had extracted our secret from us, and who, good-naturedly,

consented to do all we asked of him. I do think he would have gone into the creek itself, had it been required. But we were landed with our bag of clothes—one answered very well for both—at the place I have mentioned, and, taking turn about to shoulder the wardrobe, away we went, as fast as legs could carry us. Even Rupert seemed to feel on this occasion, and I do think he had a good deal of contrition, as he must have recollected the pain he had occasioned his excellent father and dear, good sister.

Clawbonny never looked more beautiful than when I first cast eyes on it that afternoon. There lay the house in the secure retirement of its smiling vale, the orchards just beginning to lose their blossoms, the broad, rich meadows, with the grass waving in the south wind, resembling velvet; the fields of corn of all sorts; and the cattle, as they stood ruminating or enjoying their existence in motionless self-indulgence beneath the shade of trees, seemed to speak of abundance and considerate treatment. Everything denoted peace, plenty and happiness. Yet this place, with all its blessings and security, had I willfully deserted to encounter pirates in the Straits of Sunda, shipwreck on the shores of Madagascar, jeopardy in an open boat off the Isle of France, and a miraculous preservation from a horrible death on my own coast!

At no great distance from the house was a dense grove, in which Rupert and I had, with our own hands, constructed a rude summer-house, fit to be enjoyed on just such an afternoon as this on which we had returned. When distant from it only two hundred yards, we saw the girls enter the woods, evidently taking the direction of the seat. At the same moment I caught a glimpse of Neb moving up the road from the landing at a snail's pace, as if the poor fellow dreaded to encounter the task before him. After a moment's consultation, we determined to proceed at once to the grove, and thus anticipate the account of Neb, who must pass so near the summer-house as to be seen and recognized. We met with more obstacles than we had foreseen or remembered, and when we got to a thicket close in the rear of the bench, we found that the black was already in the presence of his two "young mistresses."

The appearance of the three, when I first caught a near view of them, was such as almost to terrify me. Even Neb, whose face was usually as shining as a black bottle, was almost of the color of ashes. The poor fellow could not speak, and, though Lucy was actually shaking him to extract an explanation, the only answer she could get was tears. These flowed from Neb's eyes in streams, and, at length, the fellow threw himself on the ground, and fairly began to groan.

"Can this be shame at having run away?" exclaimed Lucy, "or does it foretell evil to the boys?"

"He knows nothing of them, not having been with them—yet, I am terrified."

"Not on my account, dearest sister," I cried aloud; "here are Rupert and I, God be praised, both in good health and safe."

I took care to remain hid, as I uttered this, not to alarm more than one sense at a time; but both the girls shrieked, and held out their arms. Rupert and I hesitated no longer, but sprung forward. I know not how it happened, though I found, on recovering my self-possession, that I was folding Lucy to my heart, while Rupert was doing the same to Grace. This little mistake, however, was soon rectified, each man embracing his own sister, as in duty bound, and as was most decorous. The girls shed torrents of tears, and assured us again and again, that this was the only really happy moment they had known since the parting on the wharf, nearly a twelvemonth before. Then followed looks at each other, exclamations of surprise and pleasure at the changes that had taken place in the appearance of all parties, and kisses and tears again in abundance.

As for Neb, the poor fellow was seen in the road, whither he had fled at the sound of my voice, looking at us like one in awe and doubt. Being satisfied in the end of our identity, as well as of our being in the flesh, the negro again threw himself on

the ground, rolling over and over, and fairly yelling with delight. After going through this process of negro excitement, he leaped up on his feet, and started for the house, shouting at the top of his voice, as if certain the good intelligence he brought would secure his own pardon—"Master Miles come home!—Master Miles come home!"

In a few minutes quiet was sufficiently restored among us four, who remained at the seat, to ask questions, and receive intelligible answers. Glad was I to ascertain that the girls had been spared the news of our loss. As for Mr. Hardinge, he was well, and busied, as usual, in discharging the duties of his holy office. He had told Grace and Lucy the name of the vessel in which we had shipped, but said nothing of the painful glimpse he had obtained of us, just as we lifted our anchor to quit the port. Grace, in a solemn manner, then demanded an outline of our adventures. As Rupert was the spokesman on this occasion, the question having been in a manner put to him as the oldest, I had an opportunity of watching the sweet countenances of the two painfully interested listeners. Rupert affected modesty in his narration, if he did not feel it, though I remarked that he dwelt a little particularly on the shot which had lodged so near him, in the head of the *Tigris's* foremast. He spoke of the whistling it made as it approached, and the violence of the blow when it struck. He had the impudence, too, to speak of my good luck in being on the other side of the top, when the shot passed through my station; whereas I do believe that the shot passed nearer to me than it did to himself. It barely missed me, and by all I could learn, Rupert was leaning over by the topmast rigging when it lodged. The fellow told his story in his own way, however, and with so much unction that I observed it made Grace look pale. The effect on Lucy was different. This excellent creature perceived my uneasiness, I half suspected, for she laughed, and, interrupting her brother, told him, "There—that's enough about the cannon-ball; now let us hear of something else." Rupert colored, for he had frequently had such frank hints from his sister, in the course of his childhood; but he had too much address to betray the vexation I knew he felt.

To own the truth, my attachment for Rupert had materially lessened with the falling off of my respect. He had manifested so much selfishness during the voyage—had shirked so much duty, most of which had fallen on poor Neb—and had been so little of the man in practice, whom he used so well to describe with his tongue—that I could no longer shut my eyes to some of his deficiencies of character. I still liked him; but it was from habit, and perhaps because he was my guardian's son, and Lucy's brother. Then I could not conceal from myself that Rupert was not, in a rigid sense, a lad of truth. He colored, exaggerated, glossed over and embellished, if he did not absolutely invent. I was not old enough then to understand that most of the statements that float about the world are nothing but truths distorted, and that nothing is more rare than unadulterated fact; that truths and lies travel in company, as described by Pope in his "Temple of Fame," until

"This or that unmixed, no mortal e'er shall find."

In this very narration of our voyage, Rupert had left false impressions on the minds of his listeners in fifty things. He had made far more of our little skirmishes than the truth would warrant, and he had neglected to do justice to Neb in his account of each of the affairs. Then he commended Captain Robbins's conduct in connection with the loss of the *John* on points that could not be sustained, and censured him for measures that deserved praise. I knew Rupert was no seaman—was pretty well satisfied, by this time, he never would make one—but I could not explain all his obliquities by referring them to ignorance. The manner, moreover, in which he represented himself as the principal actor, on all occasions, denoted so much address, that, while I felt the falsity of the impressions he left, I did not exactly see the means necessary to counteract them. So ingenious, indeed, was his manner of stringing facts and

inferences together, or what *seemed* to be facts and inferences, that I more than once caught myself actually believing that which, in sober reality, I knew to be false. I was still too young, not quite eighteen, to feel any apprehensions on the subject of Grace; and was too much accustomed to both Rupert and his sister to regard either with any feelings very widely different from those which I entertained for Grace herself.

As soon as the history of our adventures and exploits was concluded, we all had leisure to observe and comment on the alterations that time had made in our several persons. Rupert, being the oldest, was the least changed in this particular. He had got his growth early, and was only a little spread. He had cultivated a pair of whiskers at sea, which rendered his face a little more manly—an improvement, by the way—but, the effects of exposure and of the sun excepted, there was no very material change in his exterior. Perhaps, on the whole, he was improved in appearance. I think both the girls fancied this, though Grace did not say it, and Lucy only half admitted it, and that with many reservations. As for myself, I was also full grown, standing exactly six feet in my stockings, which was pretty well for eighteen. But I had also spread; a fact that is not common for lads at that age. Grace said I had lost all delicacy of appearance; and as for Lucy, though she laughed and blushed, she protested I began to look like a great bear. To confess the truth, I was well satisfied with my own appearance, did not envy Rupert a jot, and knew I could toss him over my shoulder whenever I chose. I stood the strictures on my appearance, therefore, very well; and, though no one was so much derided and laughed at as myself, in that critical discussion, no one cared less for it. Just as I was permitted to escape, Lucy said, in an undertone—

"You should have stayed at home, Miles, and then the changes would have come so gradually, no one would have noticed them, and you would have escaped being told how much you are altered, and that you are a *bear*."

I looked eagerly round at the speaker, and eyed her intently. A look of regret passed over the dear creature's face, her eyes looked as penitent as they did soft, and the flush that suffused her countenance rendered this last expression almost bewitching. At the same instant she whispered, "I did not really mean *that*."

But it was Grace's turn, and my attention was drawn to my sister. A year had made great improvements in Grace. Young as she was, she had lost much of the girlish air in the sedateness and propriety of the young woman. Grace had always something more of these last than is common; but they had now completely removed every appearance of childish, I might almost say of girlish frivolity. In person her improvement was great; though an air of exceeding delicacy rather left an impression that such a being was more intended for another world than this. There was even an air of fragility and of pure intellectuality about my poor sister, that half disposed one to fancy that she would one day be translated to a better sphere in the body precisely as she stood before human eyes.

Lucy bore the examination well. She was all woman, there being nothing about *her* to create any miraculous expectations or fanciful pictures; but she was evidently fast getting to be a very lovely woman. Honest, sincere, full of heart, overflowing with the feelings of her sex, gentle, yet spirited, buoyant, though melting with the charities; her changeful, but natural, and yet constant feelings in her, kept me incessantly in pursuit of her playful mind and varying humors. Still a more high-principled being, a firmer or more consistent friend, or a more accurate thinker on all subjects that suited her years and became her situation than Lucy Hardinge, never existed. Even Grace was influenced by her judgment, though I did not then know how much my sister's mind was guided by her simple and less pretending friend's capacity to foresee things, and to reason on their consequences.

We were more than an hour uninterruptedly together before we thought of repairing to the house. Lucy then re-

minded Rupert that he had not yet seen his father, whom she had just before observed alighting from his horse at the door of his own study. That he had been apprised of the return of the runaways, if not prodigals, was evident, she thought, by his manner; and it was disrespectful to delay seeking his forgiveness and blessing. Mr. Hardinge received us both without surprise, and totally without any show of resentment. It was about the time he expected our return, and no surprise was felt at finding this expectation realized, as a matter of course, while resentment was almost a stranger to his nature. We all shed tears, the girls sobbing aloud; and we were both solemnly blessed. Nor am I ashamed to say I knelt to receive that blessing, in an age when the cant of a pretending irreligion—there is as much cant in self-sufficiency as in hypocrisy, and they very often go together—is disposed to turn into ridicule the humbling of the person while asking for the blessing of the Almighty through the ministers of his altars; for kneel I did, and weep I did, and, I trust, the one in humility and the other in contrition.

When we had all become a little calm, and a substantial meal was placed before us adventurers, Mr. Hardinge demanded an account of all that had passed. He applied to me to give it, and I was compelled to discharge the office of an historian, somewhat against my inclination. There was no remedy, however, and I told the story in my own simple manner, and certainly in a way to leave very different impressions from many of those made by the narrative of Rupert. I thought once or twice, as I proceeded, Lucy looked sorrowful, and Grace looked surprised. I do not think I colored in the least as regarded myself, and I know I did Neb no more than justice. My tale was soon told, for I felt the whole time as if I were contradicting Rupert, who, by the way, appeared perfectly unconcerned—perfectly unconscious, indeed—on the subject of the discrepancies in the two accounts. I have since met with men who did not know the truth when it was even placed very fairly before their eyes.

Mr. Hardinge expressed his heartfelt happiness at having us back again, and soon after he ventured to ask if we were satisfied with what we had seen of the world. This was a home question, but I thought it best to meet it manfully. So far from being satisfied, I told him it was my ardent desire to get on board one of the letters-of-marque, of which so many were then fitting out in the country, and to make a voyage to Europe. Rupert, however, confessed he had mistaken his vocation, and that he thought he could do no better than to enter a lawyer's office. I was thunderstruck at this quiet admission of my friend of his incapacity to make a sailor, for it was the first intimation I heard of his intention. I had remarked a certain want of energy in various situations that required action in Rupert, but no want of courage; and I had ascribed some portion of his lassitude to the change of condition, and, possibly, of food; for, after all, that godlike creature, man, is nothing but an animal, and is just as much influenced by his stomach and digestion as a sheep or a horse.

Mr. Hardinge received his son's intimation of a preference of intellectual labors to a more physical state of existence with a gratification my own wishes did not afford him. Still, he made no particular remark to either at the time, permitting us both to enjoy our return to Clawbonny without any of the drawbacks of advice or lectures. The evening passed delightfully, the girls beginning to laugh heartily at our own ludicrous accounts of the mode of living on board ship, and of our various scenes in China, the Isle of Bourbon, and elsewhere. Rupert had a great deal of humor, and a very dry way of exhibiting it; in short, he was almost a genius in the mere superficialities of life; and even Grace rewarded his efforts to entertain us, with laughter to tears. Neb was introduced after supper, and the fellow was censured and commended; censured for having abandoned the household gods, and commended for not having deserted their master. His droll descriptions of the Chinese, their dress, pigtails, shoes, and broken English, diverted even Mr.

Hardinge, who, I believe, felt as much like a boy on this occasion, as any of the party. A happier evening than that which followed in the little *tea*-parlor, as my dear mother used to call it, was never passed in the century that the roof had covered the old walls of Clawbonny.

Next day I had a private conversation with my guardian, who commenced the discourse by rendering a sort of account of the proceeds of my property during the past year. I listened respectfully, and with some interest; for I saw the first gave Mr. Hardinge great satisfaction, and I confess the last afforded some little pleasure to myself. I found that things had gone on very prosperously. Ready money was accumulating, and I saw that, by the time I came of age, sufficient cash would be on hand to give me a ship of my own, should I choose to purchase one. From that moment I was secretly determined to qualify myself to command her in the intervening time. Little was said of the future, beyond an expression of the hope, by my guardian, that I would take time to reflect before I came to a final decision on the subject of my profession. To this I said nothing beyond making a respectful inclination of the head.

For the next month, Clawbonny was a scene of uninterrupted merriment and delight. We had few families to visit in our immediate neighborhood, it is true; and Mr. Hardinge proposed an excursion to the Springs—the country was then too new, and the roads too bad, to think of Niagara—but to this I would not listen. I cared not for the Springs—knew little of, and cared less for fashion—and loved Clawbonny to its stocks and stones. We remained at home, then, living principally for each other. Rupert read a good deal to the girls under the direction of his father; while I passed no small portion of my time in athletic exercises. The *Grace and Lucy* made one or two tolerably long cruises in the river, and at length I conceived the idea of taking the party down to town in the *Wallingford*. Neither of the girls had ever seen New York, or much of the Hudson; nor had either ever seen a ship. The sloops that passed up and down the Hudson, with an occasional schooner, were the extent of their acquaintance with vessels: and I began to feel it to be matter of reproach that those in whom I took so deep an interest, should be so ignorant. As for the girls themselves, they both admitted, now I was a sailor, that their desire to see a regular, three-masted, full-rigged ship, was increased sevenfold.

Mr. Hardinge heard my proposition, at first, as a piece of pleasantry; but Grace expressing a strong desire to see a large town, or what was thought a large town in this country, in 1799, and Lucy looking wistful, though she remained silent under an apprehension her father could not afford the expense of such a journey, which her imagination rendered a great deal more formidable than it actually proved to be, the excellent divine finally acquiesced. The expense was disposed of in a very simple manner. The journey, both ways, would be made in the *Wallingford;* and Mr. Hardinge was not so unnecessarily scrupulous as to refuse passages for himself and children in the sloop, which never exacted passage-money from any who went to or from the farm. Food was so cheap, too, as to be a matter of no consideration; and, being entitled legally to receive that at Clawbonny, it made no great difference whether it was taken on board the vessel, or in the house. Then there was a Mrs. Bradfort in New York, a widow lady of easy fortune, who was a cousin-german of Mr. Hardinge's—his father's sister's daughter—and with her he always stayed in his own annual visits to attend the convention of the Church—I beg pardon, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as it is now *de rigueur* to say; I wonder some ultra does not introduce the manifest improvement into the Apostles' Creed of saying, "I believe in the Holy Protestant Episcopal Catholic Church, etc."—but, the excellent divine, in his annual attendance on the convention, was accustomed to stay with his kinswoman, who often pressed him to bring both Lucy and Grace to see her; her house in Wall Street being abundantly large enough to accommodate a much

more numerous party. "Yes," said Mr. Hardinge, "that shall be the arrangement. The girls and I will stay with Mrs. Bradfort, and the young men can live at a tavern. I dare say this new City Hotel, which seems to be large enough to contain a regiment, will hold even *them*. I will write this very evening to my cousin, so as not to take her by surprise."

In less than a week after this determination an answer was received from Mrs. Bradfort; and, the very next day, the whole party, Neb included, embarked in the *Wallingford*. Very different was this passage down the Hudson from that which had preceded it. Then I had the sense of error about me, while my heart yearned toward the two dear girls we had left on the wharf, but now everything was aboveboard, sincere, and by permission. It is scarcely necessary to say that Grace and Lucy were enchanted with everything they saw. The Highlands, in particular, threw them both into ecstasies, though I have since seen so much of the world as to understand, with nearly all experienced tourists, that this is *relatively* the worst part of the scenery of this beautiful river. When I say *relatively*, I mean as comparing the *bolder* parts of our stream with those of others—speaking of them as *high lands*—many other portions of this good globe having a much superior *grandeur*, while very few have so much lovely river scenery compressed into so small a space as is to be found in the other parts of the Hudson.

In due time we arrived in New York, and I had the supreme happiness of pointing out to the girls the State's Prison, the Bear Market, and the steeples of St. Paul and Trinity—*old* Trinity, as it was so lately the fashion to style a church that was built only a few years before, and which, in my youth, was considered as magnificent as it was venerable. That building has already disappeared; and another edifice, which is now termed splendid, *vast*, and I know not what, has been reared in its place. By the time this is gone, and one or two generations of buildings have succeeded, each approaching nearer to the high standard of church architecture in the old world, the Manhattanese will get to understand something of the use of the degrees of comparison on such subjects. When that day shall arrive, they will cease to be provincial, and not till then.

What a different thing was Wall Street, in 1799, from what it is to-day! Then, where so many Grecian temples are now reared to Plutus, were rows of modest provincial dwellings; not a tittle more provincial, however, than the thousand meretricious houses of brick and marble that have since started up in their neighborhood, but far less pretending, and insomuch the more creditable. Mrs. Bradfort lived in one of these respectable abodes, and hither Mr. Hardinge led the way, with just as much confidence as one would now walk into Bleecker Street, or the Fifth Avenue. Money-changers were then unknown, or, if known, were of so little account that they had not sufficient force to form a colony and a league by themselves. Even the banks did not deem it necessary to be within a stone's throw of each other—I believe there were but two—as it might be in self-defense. We have seen all sorts of expedients adopted in this sainted street, to protect the money-bags, from the little temple that was intended to be so small as only to admit the dollars and those who were to take care of them, up to the edifice that might contain so many rogues as to render things safe on the familiar principle of setting a thief to catch a thief. All would not do. The difficulty has been found to be unconquerable, except in those cases in which the homely and almost worn-out expedient of employing honest men has been resorted to. But to return from the gossipings of old age to an agreeable widow, who was still under forty.

Mrs. Bradfort received Mr. Hardinge in a way to satisfy us all that she was delighted to see him. She had prepared a room for Rupert and myself, and no apologies or excuses would be received. We had to consent to accept of her hospitalities. In an hour's time all were established, and I believe that all were at home.

I shall not dwell on the happiness that succeeded. We were all too young to go to parties, and I might almost add, New York itself was too young to have any; but in the last I should have been mistaken, though there were not as many *children's* balls in 1799 perhaps, after allowing for the difference in population, as there are to-day. If too young to be company, we were not too young to see sights. I sometimes laugh as I remember what these were at that time. There was such a museum as would now be thought lightly of in a western city of fifteen or twenty years' growth—a circus kept by a man of the name of Ricketts—the theater in John Street, a very modest Thespian edifice—and a lion, I mean literally the beast, that was kept in a cage quite out of town, that his roaring might not disturb the people, somewhere near the spot where the *triangle* that is called Franklin *Square* now is. All these we saw, even to the theater; good, indulgent Mr. Hardinge seeing no harm in letting us go thither under the charge of Mrs. Bradfort. I shall never forget the ecstasy of that night! The novelty was quite as great to Rupert and myself as it was to the girls; for though we had been to China, we had never been to the play.

Well was it said, "Vanity, vanity—all is vanity!" He that lives as long as I have lived, will have seen most of his opinions, and I think I may add, *all* his tastes, change. Nothing short of revelation has a stronger tendency to convince us of the temporary character of our probationary state in this world, than to note for how short a period, and for what imperfect ends, all our hopes and success in life have been buoying us up, and occupying our minds. After fifty, the delusion begins to give way; and, though we may continue to live, and even to be happy, blind indeed must be he who does not see the end of his road, and foresee some of the great results to which it is to lead. But of all this, our quartet thought little in the year 1799.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Thou art the same eternal sea!
The earth hath many shapes and forms
Of hill and valley, flower and tree;
Fields that the fervid noontide warms,
Or Winter's rugged grasp deforms,
Or bright with Autumn's golden store;
Thou coverest up thy face with storms,
Or smilest serene—but still thy roar
And dashing foam go up to vex the sea-beat shore."—LUNT.

I HAD a free conversation with my guardian, shortly after we reached town, on the subject of my going to sea again. The whole country was alive with the armament of the new marine; and cocked hats, blue coats, and white lappels, began to appear in the streets, with a parade that always marks the new officer and the new service. Now, one meets distinguished naval men at every turn, and sees nothing about their persons to denote the profession, unless in actual employment afloat, even the cockade being laid aside; whereas in 1799 the harness was put on as soon as the parchment was received, and only laid aside to turn in. Ships were building or equipping in all parts of the country; and it is matter of surprise to me that I escaped the fever, and did not apply to be made a midshipman. Had I seen another captain who interested me as much as Captain Dale, I make no doubt my career would have been quite different; but, as things were, I had imbibed the prejudice that Southey, in his very interesting, but, in a professional sense, very worthless, "Life of Nelson" had attributed to that hero—"aft, the more honor; forward, the better man." Thus far, I had not got into the cabin windows, and, like all youngsters who fairly begin on the forecastle, felt proud of my own manhood and disdain of hazards and toil. I determined, therefore, to pursue the course I had originally pointed out to myself and follow in the footsteps of my father.

Privateers were out of the question in a war with a country that had no commerce. Nor do I think I would have gone in a privateer under any circumstances. The business of carrying on a warfare merely for gain has ever struck me as discredit-

able; though it must be admitted the American system of private-armed cruisers has always been more respectable and better conducted than that of most other nations. This has been owing to the circumstance that men of a higher class than is usual in Europe have embarked in the enterprises. To a letter-of-marque, however, there could be no objections; her regular business is commerce; she arms only in self-defense, or, if she capture anything, it is merely such enemies as crossed her path, and who would capture her if they could. I announced to Mr. Hardinge, therefore, my determination not to return to Clawbonny, but to look for a berth in some letter-of-marque, while then in town.

Neb had received private instructions, and my sea-dunnage, as well as his own, was on board the *Wallingford* — low enough the wreck had reduced both to be —and money obtained from Mr. Hardinge was used to purchase more. I now began to look about me for a ship, determined to please my eye as to the vessel, and my judgment as to the voyage. Neb had orders to follow the wharves on the same errand. I would sooner trust Neb than Rupert on such a duty. The latter had no taste for ships; felt no interest in them, and I have often wondered why he took a fancy to go to sea at all. With Neb it was very different. He was already an expert seaman; could hand, reef and steer, knot and splice, and was as useful as nine men in ten on board a vessel. It is true, he did not know when it became necessary to take in the last reef—had no notion of stowing a cargo so as to favor the vessel, or help her sailing; but he would break out a cask sooner than most men I ever met with. There was too much "nigger" in him for headwork of that sort, though he was ingenious and ready enough in his way. A sterling fellow was Neb, and I got in time to love him very much as I can conceive one would love a brother.

One day, after I had seen all the sights, and had begun to think seriously of finding a ship, I was strolling along the wharves on the latter errand, when I heard a voice I knew cry out, "There, Captain Williams, there's just your chap: he'll make as good a third mate as can be found in all America." I had a sort of presentiment this applied to me, though I could not, on the instant, recall the speaker's name. Turning to look in the direction of the sounds, I saw the hard countenance of Marble, alongside the weather-beaten face of a middle-aged ship-master, both of whom were examining me over the nettings of a very promising-looking armed merchantman. I bowed to Mr. Marble, who beckoned me to come on board, where I was regularly introduced to the master.

This vessel was called the *Crisis*, a very capital name for a craft in a country where crises of one sort or another occur regularly as often as once in six months. She was a tight little ship of about four hundred tons, had hoop-hole bulwarks, as I afterward learned, with nettings for hammocks and old junk, principally the latter; and showed ten nine-pounders, carriage-guns, in her batteries. I saw she was loaded, and was soon given to understand that her shipping articles were then open, and the serious question was of procuring a third mate. Officers were scarce, so many young men were pressing into the navy, and Mr. Marble ventured to recommend me, from near a twelvemonth's knowledge of my character. I had not anticipated a berth aft quite so soon, and yet I had an humble confidence in my own ability to discharge the duty. Captain Williams questioned me for fifteen or twenty minutes, had a short conversation with Mr. Marble alone, and then frankly offered me the berth. The voyage was to be round the world, and it took my fancy at the very sound. The ship was to take a cargo of flour to England; there, she was to receive a small assorted cargo for the northwest coast, and some of the sandal-wood islands; after disposing of her toys and manufactured articles in barter, she was to sail for Canton, exchange her furs, wood, and other articles, for teas, etc., and return home. To engage in this voyage, I was offered the berth I have metioned, and thirty dollars a month. The wages were

of little moment to me, but the promotion and the voyage were of great account. The ship, too, carried out letters-of-marque and reprisal with her, and there were the chances of meeting some Frenchman in the European waters at least.

I examined the vessel, the berth I was to occupy, made a great many shy glances at the captain, to ascertain his character by that profound expedient, analyzing his looks, and finally determined to ship, on condition Neb should be taken as an ordinary seaman. As soon as Marble heard this last proposal, he explained the relation in which the black stood to me, and earnestly advised his being received as a seaman. The arrangement was made accordingly, and I went at once to the notary and signed the articles. Neb was also found, and he was shipped too; this time regularly, Mr. Hardinge attending and giving his sanction to what was done. The worthy divine was in excellent spirits, for that very day he had made an arrangement with a friend at the bar to place Rupert in his office, Mrs. Bradfort insisting on keeping her young kinsman in her house, as a regular inmate. This left on the father no more charge than to furnish Rupert with clothes, and a few dollars of pocket money. But I knew Rupert too well to suppose he would, or could, be content with the little he might expect from the savings of Mr. Hardinge. I was not in want of money. My guardian had supplied me so amply, that not only had I paid my debt to the owners of the *John*, and fully equipped myself for the voyage, but I actually possessed dollars enough to supply all my probable wants during the expected absence. Many of the officers and men of the *Crisis* left behind them orders with their wives and families to receive their wages, in part, during their absence, as letters from time to time apprised the owners that these people were on board, and in discharge of their several duties.

I determined on giving Rupert the benefit of such an arrangement. First presenting him with twenty dollars from my own little store, I took him with me to the counting-house, and succeeded, though not without some difficulty, in obtaining for my friend a credit of twenty dollars a month, promising faithfully to repay any balance that might arise against me in consequence of the loss of the ship, or of any accident to myself. This I was enabled to do on the strength of my credit as the owner of Clawbonny; for, as is usual in these cases, I passed for being much richer than I really was, though far from being poor.

I will acknowledge that, while I felt no reluctance at making this arrangement in favor of Rupert, I felt mortified he should accept it. There are certain acts we may all wish to perform, and, yet, which bring regrets when successfully performed. I was sorry that *my* friend, Lucy's brother, Grace's admirer—for I was quick enough in perceiving that Rupert began to entertain fancies of that sort—had not pride enough to cause him to decline receiving money which must be earned by the sweat of my brow, and this, moreover, in a mode of life he had not himself sufficient resolution to encounter a second time. But he accepted the offer, and there was an end of it.

As everything was alive in 1798, the *Crisis* was ready to sail in three days after I joined her. We hauled into the North River, as became the dignity of our voyage, and got our crew. On the whole we mustered a pretty good body of men, ten of them being green; fellows who had never seen the ocean, but who were young, healthy, and athletic, and who promised to be useful before a great while. Including those aft, we counted thirty-eight souls on board. The ship was got ready in hopes of being able to sail of a Thursday, for Captain Williams was a thoughtful man, and was anxious to get the ship fairly at sea, with the first work done, previously to the next Sabbath. Some small matters, however, could not be got through with in time; and, as for sailing of a Friday, that was out of the question. No one did that, in 1798, who could help it. This gave us a holiday, and I got leave to pass the afternoon and evening ashore.

Rupert, Grace, Lucy, and I, took a

long walk into the country that evening; that is, we went into the fields, and along the lanes, for some distance above the present site of Canal Street. Lucy and I walked together most of the time, and we both felt sad at the idea of so long a separation as was now before us. The voyage might last three years; and I should be legally a man, my own master, and Lucy a young woman of near nineteen, by that time. Terrible ages in perspective were these, and which seemed to us pregnant with as many changes as the life of a man.

"Rupert will be admitted to the bar when I get back," I casually remarked, as we talked the matter over.

"He will, indeed," the dear girl adswered. "Now you *are* to go, Miles, I almost regret my brother is not to be in the ship; you have known each other so long, love each other so much, and have already gone through such frightful trials in company."

"Oh! I shall do well enough—there'll be Neb; and as for Rupert, I think he will be better satisfied ashore than at sea. Rupert is a sort of natural lawyer."

By this I merely meant he was good at subterfuge, and could tell his own story.

"Yes, but Neb is not Rupert, Miles," Lucy answered, quick as thought, and I fancied a little reproachfully.

"Very true—no doubt I shall miss your brother, and that, too, very much, at times; but all I meant in speaking of Neb was, as you know, that he and I have liked each other as long as I can remember."

Lucy was silent, and I felt embarrassed and a little at a loss what to say next. But a girl approaching sixteen, and who is with a youth who possesses her entire confidence, is not apt to be long silent. Something she *will* say; and how often is that something warm with natural feeling, instinct with truth, and touching from its confiding simplicity!

"You will sometimes think of us, Miles?" was Lucy's next remark, and it was said in a tone that induced me to look her full in the face, when I discovered that her eyes were suffused with tears.

"Of that you may be *very* certain, and I hope to be rewarded in kind. But now I think of it, Lucy, I have a debt to pay you, and, at the same time, a little interest. Here are the half-joes you forced me to take last year, when we parted at Clawbonny. See, they are exactly the same pieces; for I would as soon have parted with a finger as with one of them."

"I had hoped they might have been of use to you, and had quite forgotten them. You have destroyed an agreeable illusion."

"Is it not quite as agreeable to know we had no occasion for them? No, here they are; and, now I go with Mr. Hardinge's full approbation, you very well know I can be in no want of money. So there is your gold; and here, Lucy, is some interest for the use of it."

I made an effort to put something into the dear girl's hand as I spoke, but all the strength I could properly apply was not equal to the purpose. So tightly did she keep her little fingers compressed, that I could not succeed without a downright effort at force.

"No—no—Miles," she said hurriedly—almost huskily; "that will never do! I am not Rupert—you may prevail with him; never with *me!*"

"Rupert! What can Rupert have to do with such a thing as this locket? Youngsters don't wear lockets."

Lucy's fingers separated as easily as an infant's, and I put my little offering into her hand without any more resistance. I was sorry, however, to discover that, by some means unknown to me, she had become acquainted with the arrangement I had made as respected the twenty dollars a month. I afterward ascertained that this secret had leaked out through Neb, who had it from one of the clerks of the counting-house who had visited the ship, and repeated it to Mrs. Bradfort's black maid in one of his frequent visits to the house. This is a common channel of information, though it seldom proves as true as it did in this instance.

I could see that Lucy was delighted with her locket. It was a very pretty ornament, in the first place, and it had her own hair, that of Grace, Rupert, and my own,

very prettily braided together, so as to form a wreath, made like a rope, or a grummet, encircling a combination of letters that included all our initials. In this there was nothing that was particular, while there was much that was affectionate. Had I not consulted Grace on the subject, it is possible I should have been less cautious, though I declare I had no thought of making love. All this time I fancied I felt for, and trusted Lucy as another sister. I was shrewd enough to detect Rupert's manner and feeling toward my own sister, and I felt afraid it was, or soon would be, fully reciprocated; but as to imagining myself in love with Lucy Hardinge, or any one else, the thought never crossed my mind, though the dear girl herself so often did!

I saw Lucy's smile and I could not avoid noticing the manner in which, once or twice, unconsciously to herself, I do believe, this simple-minded, sincere creature pressed the hand which retained the locket to her heart; and yet it made no very lively impression on my imagination at the time. The conversation soon changed, and we began to converse of other things. I have since fancied that Grace had left us alone in order that I might return the half-joes to Lucy, and offer the locket; for, looking round and seeing the latter in its new owner's hand, while Lucy was bestowing on it one of the hundred glances of grateful pleasure it received that afternoon, she waited until we came up, when she took my arm, remarking, as this was to be our last evening together, she must come in for her share of the conversation. Now I solemnly affirm that this was the nearest approach to anything like a love-scene that had ever passed between Lucy Hardinge and myself.

I would gladly pass over the leave-taking, and shall say but little about it. Mr. Hardinge called me into his room, when we got back to the house. He spoke earnestly and solemnly to me, recalling to my mind many of his early and more useful precepts. He then kissed me, gave me his blessing, and promised to remember me in his prayers. As I left him, and I believe he went on his knees as soon as my back was turned, Lucy was waiting for me in the passage. She was in tears, and paler than common, but her mind seemed made up to sustain a great sacrifice like a woman. She put a small, but exceedingly neat copy of the Bible into my hand, and uttered as well as emotion would permit—"There, Miles; *that* is *my* keepsake. I do not ask you to think of *me* when you read; but think of *God*." She then snatched a kiss, and flew into her room and locked the door. Grace was below, and she wept on my neck like a child, kissing me again and again, and calling me "her brother—her dear, her *only* brother." I was obliged actually to tear myself away from Grace. Rupert went with me to the ship, and passed an hour or two on board. As we crossed the threshold, I heard a window open above my head, and, looking up, I saw Lucy, with streaming eyes, leaning forward to say, "Write, Miles—write as often as you possibly can."

Man must be a stern being by nature, to be able to tear himself from such friends, in order to encounter enemies, hardships, dangers and toil, and all without any visible motive. Such was my case, however, for I wanted not for a competency, or for most of those advantages which might tempt one to abandon the voyage. Of such a measure, the possibility never crossed my mind. I believed that it was just as necessary for me to remain third mate of the *Crisis*, and to stick by the ship while she would float, as Mr. Adams thinks it necessary for him to present abolition petitions to a Congress which will not receive them. We both of us, doubtless, believed ourselves the victims of fate. We sailed at sunrise, with and tide favoring. We had anchored off Cortlandt Street, and as the ship swept past the Battery I saw Rupert, who had only gone ashore in the pilot's boat at daylight, with two females, watching our movements. The girls did not dare to wave their handkerchiefs; but what cared I for that? I knew that their good wishes, kind wishes, tender wishes, went with me; and this little touch of affection, which woman knows so well how to manifest,

made me both happy and sad for the remainder of the day.

The *Crisis* was an unusually fast ship, faster even than the *Tigris*; coppered to the bends, copper-fastened, and with a live-oak frame. No better craft sailed out of the Republic. Uncle Sam had tried to purchase her for one of his new navy; but the owners, having this voyage in view, refused his tempting offers. She was no sooner under her canvas, than all hands of us perceived we were in a traveler; and glad enough were we to be certain of the fact, for we had a long road before us. This, too, was with the wind free, and in smooth water; whereas those who knew the vessel asserted her *forte* was on a bowline and in a sea—that is to say, she would sail relatively faster than most other craft, under the latter circumstances.

There was a strange pleasure to me, notwithstanding all I had suffered previously, all the risks I had run, and all I had left behind me, in finding myself once more on the broad ocean. As for Neb, the fellow was fairly enraptured. So quickly and intelligently did he obey his orders, that he won a reputation before we crossed the bar. The smell of the ocean seemed to imbue him with a species of nautical inspiration, and even I was astonished with his readiness and activity. As for myself, I was every way at home. Very different was this exit from the port from that of the previous year. Then everything was novel, and not a little disgusting. Now I had little, almost nothing to learn—literally nothing, I might have said, were it not that every shipmaster has certain *ways* of his own, that it behooves all his subordinates to learn as quickly as possible. Then I lived aft, where we not only had plates, and tablecloths, and tumblers, and knives and forks, but comparatively *clean* articles of the sort. I say comparatively, the two other degrees being usually wanting in northwest traders.

The *Crisis* went to sea with a lively breeze at southwest, the wind shifting after she had got into the lower bay. There were a dozen sail of us altogether, and in our little fleet were two of Uncle Sam's men, who felt disposed to try their hands with us. We crossed the bar, all three of us, within a cable's length of each other, and made sail in company, with the wind a trifle abaft the beam. Just as Navesink disappeared, our two men-of-war, merchantmen altered, hauled up on bowlines, and jogged off toward the West Indies, being at the time about a league astern of us. This success put us all in high good humor, and had such an effect on Marble in particular, that he began to give it as his opinion that our only superiority over them would not be found confined to sailing on an experiment. It is very convenient to think favorably of one's self, and it is certainly comfortable to entertain the same notion as respects one's ship.

I confess to a little awkwardness at first, in acting as an officer. I was young and commanded men old enough to be my father—regular sea-dogs, who were as critical in all that related to the niceties of the calling, as the journalist who is unable to appreciate the higher qualities of a book is hypercritical on its minor faults. But a few days gave me confidence, and I soon found I was obeyed as readily as the first mate.

A squall struck the ship in my watch about a fortnight out, and I succeeded in getting in sail and saving everything, canvas and spars, in a way that did me infinite service aft. Captain Williams spoke to me on the subject, commending the orders I had given, and the coolness with which they had been issued; for, as I afterward understood, he remained some time in the companionway, keeping the other two mates back, though all hands had been called, in order to see how I could get along by myself in such a strait. On this occasion, I never saw a human being exert himself like Neb. He felt that my honor was concerned. I do really think the fellow did two men's duty the whole time the squall lasted. Until this little incident occurred, Captain Williams was in the habit of coming on deck to examine the heavens, and see how things were getting on in my night-watches;

but, after this, he paid no more visits of this sort to me than he paid to Mr. Marble. I had been gratified by his praises; but this quiet mode of showing confidence gave me more happiness than I can express.

We had a long passage out, the wind hanging to the eastward near three weeks. At length we got moderate southerly breezes, and began to travel on our course. Twenty-four hours after we had got the fair wind, I had the morning-watch, and made, as the day dawned, a sail directly abeam of us, to windward, about three leagues distant or just hull down. I went into the maintop, and examined her with a glass. She was a ship seemingly of about our own size, and carrying everything that would draw. I did not send word below until it was broad daylight, or for near half an hour; and in all that time her bearings did not vary any perceptible distance.

Just as the sun rose, the captain and chief mate made their appearance on deck. At first they agreed in supposing the stranger a stray English West Indiaman, bound home; for at that time few merchant vessels were met at sea that were not English or American. The former usually sailed in convoys, however; and the captain accounted for the circumstance that this was not thus protected, by the fact of her sailing so fast. She might be a letter-of-marque, like ourselves, and vessels of that character did not take convoy. As the two vessels lay exactly abeam of each other, with square yards, it was not easy to judge of the sparring of the stranger, except by means of his masts. Marble, judging by the appearance of his topsails, began to think our neighbor might be a Frenchman, he had so much hoist to the sails. After some conversation on the subject, the captain ordered me to brace forward the yards, as far as the studding-sails would allow, and to luff nearer to the stranger. While the ship was thus changing her course, the day advanced, and our crew got their breakfast.

As a matter of course, the strange ship, which kept on the same line of sailing as before, drew ahead of us a little, while we neared her sensibly. In the course of three hours we were within a league of her, but well on her lee-quarter. Marble now unhesitatingly pronounced her to be a Frenchman, there being no such thing as mistaking the sails. To suppose an Englishman would go to sea with such triangles of royals, he held to be entirely out of the question; and then he referred to me to know if I did not remember the brig "we had licked in the West Indies, last v'y'ge, which had just such r'yals as the chap up there to windward?" I could see the resemblance, certainly, and had remarked the same peculiarity in the few French vessels I had seen.

Under all the circumstances, Captain Williams determined to get on the weather-quarter of our neighbor, and take a still nearer look at him. That he was armed, we could see already; and, as near as we could make out, he carried twelve guns, or just two more than we did ourselves. All this was encouraging; sufficiently so, at least, to induce us to make a much closer examination than we had yet done.

It took two more hours to bring the *Crisis*, fast as she sailed, on the weather-quarter of her neighbor, distant about a mile. Here our observations were much more to the purpose, and even Captain Williams pronounced the stranger to be a Frenchman, "and no doubt, a letter-of-marque, like ourselves." He had just uttered these words, when we saw the other vessel's studding-sails coming down, her royals and topgallant-sails clewing up, and all the usual signs of her stripping for a fight. We had set our ensign early in the day, but, as yet, had got no answering symbol of nationality from the chase. As soon as she had taken in all her light canvas, however, she clewed up her courses, fired a gun to windward, and hoisted the French *tri-color*, the most graceful flag among the emblems of Christendom, but one that has been as remarkably unsuccessful in the deeds it has witnessed on the high seas as it has been remarkable for the reverse on the land.

The French have not been wanting in excellent sailors—gallant seamen, too; but the result of their exploits afloat have ever borne a singular disproportion to the means employed—a few occasional exceptions just going to prove that the causes have been of a character as peculiar as these results have, in nearly all ages, been uniform. I have heard the want of success, in maritime exploits, among the French, attributed to a want of sympathy, in the nation, with maritime things. Others, again, have supposed that the narrow system of preferring birth to merit, which pervaded the whole economy of the French marine, as well as of its army, previously to the Revolution, could not fail to destroy the former, inasmuch as a man of family would not consent to undergo the toil and hardships that are unavoidable to the training of the true seaman. This last reason, however, can scarcely be the true one, as the young English noble has often made the most successful naval officer; and the marine of France, in 1798, had surely every opportunity of perfecting itself, by downright practice, uninjured by favoritism, as that of America. For myself, though I have now reflected on the subject for years, I can come to no other conclusion than that national character has some very important agency—or, perhaps, it might be safer to say, *has* had some very important agency—through some cause or other, in disqualifying France from becoming a great naval power, in the sense of skill; in that of mere force, so great a nation must always be formidable. Now she sends her princes to sea, however, we may look for different results.

Notwithstanding the fact that an Englishman, or an American, rarely went alongside of a Frenchman, in 1798, without a strong moral assurance of victory, he was sometimes disappointed. There was no lack of courage in their enemies, and it occasionally happened that there was no lack of skill. Every manifestation that the experience of our captain could detect, went to show that we had fallen in with one of these exceptions. As we drew nearer to our enemy, we perceived that he was acting like a seaman. His sails had been furled without haste or confusion; an infallible evidence of coolness and discipline when done on the eve of battle, and signs that the watchful seaman, on such occasions, usually notes as unerring indications of the sort of struggle that awaits him. It was consequently understood, among us on the quarter-deck, that we were likely to have a warm day's work of it. Nevertheless, we had gone too far to retreat without an effort, and we began, in our turn, to shorten sail, in readiness for the combat. Marble was a prince of a fellow, when it came to anything serious. I never saw him shorten sail so coolly and readily as he did that very day. We had everything ready in ten minutes after we began.

It was rare, indeed, to see two letters-of-marque set to as coolly and as scientifically as were the facts with the *Crisis* and *la Dame de Nantes;* for so, as we afterward ascertained, was our antagonist called. Neither party aimed at any great advantage by maneuvering; but we came up alongside of "The Lady," as our men subsequently nicknamed the Frenchman. the two vessels delivering their broadsides nearly at the same instant. I was stationed on the forecastle, in charge of the head-sheets, with orders to attend generally to the braces and the rigging, using a musket in moments that were not otherwise employed. Away went both my jib-sheet blocks at the beginning, giving me a very pretty job from the outset. This was but the commencement of trouble; for, during the two hours and a half that we lay battering *la Dame de Nantes*, and she lay battering us, I had really so much to attend to in the way of reeving, knotting, splicing, and turning in afresh, that I had scarcely a minute to look about me, in order to ascertain how the day was going. I fired my musket but twice. The glimpses I did manage to take were far from satisfactory, however; several of our people being killed or wounded, one gun fairly crippled by a shot, and our rigging in a sad plight. The only thing encouraging was Neb's shout, the fellow

making it a point to roar almost as loud as his gun, at each discharge.

It was evident from the first that the Frenchman had nearly twice as many men as we carried. This rendered any attempt at boarding imprudent, and, in the way of pounding, our prospects were by no means flattering. At length I heard a rushing sound over my head, and looking up, I saw that the main-topmast, with the yards and sails, had come down on the fore-braces, and might shortly be expected on deck. At this point, Captain Williams ordered all hands from the guns to clear the wreck. At the same instant, our antagonist, with a degree of complaisance that I could have hugged him for, ceased firing also. Both sides seemed to think it was very foolish for two merchantmen to lie within a cable's length of each other, trying which could do the other the most harm; and both sides set about the, by this time, very necessary duty of repairing damages. While this was going on, the men at the wheel, by a species of instinctive caution, did their whole duty. The *Crisis* luffed all she was able, while *la Dame de Nantes* edged away all she conveniently could, placing more than a mile of blue water between the two vessels, before we, who were at work aloft, were aware they were so decidedly running on diverging lines.

It was night before we got our wreck clear; and then we had to look about us, to get out spare spars, fit them, rig them, point them, and sway them aloft. The last operation, however, was deferred until morning. As it was, the day's work had been hard, and the people really wanted rest. Rest was granted them at eight o'clock; at which hour our late antagonist was visible about a league distant, the darkness beginning to envelop her. In the morning the horizon was clear, owing to the repulsion which existed in so much force between the two vessels. It was not our business to trouble ourselves about the fate of our adversary, but to take heed of our own. That morning we got up our spars, crossed the yards, and made sail again. We had several days' work in repairing all our damages; but, happening to be found for a long voyage, and well found, too, by the end of a week the *Crisis* was in as good order as if we had not fought a battle. As for the combat, it was one of those in which either side might claim the victory, or not, as it suited tastes. We had very ingenious excuses for our failure, however; and I make no doubt the French were just as ready, in this way, as we were ourselves.

Our loss in this engagement amounted to two men killed outright, and to seven wounded, two of whom died within a few days. The remaining wounded all recovered, though the second mate, who was one of them, I believe never got to be again the man he had been. A canister-shot lodged near his hip, and the creature we had on board as a surgeon was not the hero to extract it. In that day, the country was not so very well provided with medical men on the land as to spare many good ones to the sea. In the new navy it was much the fashion to say, "If you want a leg amputated, send for the carpenter; he does know how to use a saw, while it is questionable whether the doctor knows how to use anything." Times, however, are greatly altered in this respect; the gentlemen who now compose this branch of the service being not only worthy of commendation for their skill and services, but worthy of the graduated rank which I see they are just now asking of the justice of their country, and which, as that country ordinarily administers justice, I am much afraid they will ask in vain.

CHAPTER IX.

"If we
Cannot defend our own door from the dog,
Let us be worried; and our nation lose
The name of hardiness, and policy."—HENRY V.

THE combat between the *Crisis* and *la Dame de Nantes* took place in 42° 37′ 12″ north latitude, and 34° 16′ 43″ west longitude, from Greenwich. This was very near the center of the northern Atlantic, and gave us ample time to get our ship in good condition before we drew in with the land. Shortly after the affair,

the wind came out light at northeast, forcing us down nearer to the Bay of Biscay than was at all convenient, when bound to London. The weather grew foggy, too, which is not usual on the coast of Europe, with the wind at east, and the nights dark. Just a fortnight after the action I was awakened early one morning by a rough shake of the shoulder from Marble, who had the watch, but who was calling me at least an hour before the time. "Bear a hand and turn out," he said; "I want you on deck, Mr. Wallingford." I obeyed, of course, and soon stood in the presence of the chief mate, rubbing my eyes diligently, as they had to be opened by friction.

It was just six bells, or seven o'clock, and one of the watch was on the point of making the bell proclaim as much, when Mr. Marble ordered him not to strike the hour. The weather was thick, or rather foggy, and the wind light, with very little sea going. All this I had time to notice, to listen to the unusual order about the bell, and to gape twice, before the mate turned to me. He seized my arm, carried me on the lee side of the quarter-deck, shook his finger at a vacant spot in the fog, and said:

"Miles, my boy, down yonder, within half a mile of this very spot, is our friend the Frenchman!"

"How is it possible you can know that, Mr. Marble?" I demanded in surprise.

"Because I have seen him, with these two good-looking eyes of mine. This fog opens and shuts like a playhouse-curtain, and I got a peep at the chap, about ten minutes since. It was a short look, but it was a sure one; I would swear to the fellow in any admiralty court in Christendom."

"And what do you intend to do, Mr. Marble? We found him a hard subject in clear weather; what can we do with him in thick?"

"That depends on the old man; his very natur' is overlaid by what has happened already, and I rather think he will be for a fresh scrimmage"—Marble was an uneducated Kennebunk man, and by no means particular about his English. "There'll be good picking in that French gentleman, Master Miles, for those who come in at the beginning of the plunder!"

The chief mate then told me to go below and turn up all hands, making as little rumpus about it as possible. This I did; and when I returned to the deck, I found the fingers of Marble going again, with Captain Williams for his auditor, just as they had gone to me, a few minutes earlier. Being an officer, I made no scruples about joining the party. Marble was giving his account of the manner in which he had momentarily seen the enemy, the canvas he was under, the course he was steering, and the air of security that prevailed about him. So much, he insisted he had noted, though he saw the ship for about twenty seconds only. All this, however, might be true, for a seaman's eye is quick, and he has modes of his own for seeing a great deal in a brief space of time. Marble now proposed that we should go to quarters, run alongside of the Frenchman, pour in a broadside, and board him in the smoke. Our success would be certain, could we close with him without being seen; and it would be almost as certain, could we engage him with our guns by surprise. The chief mate was of opinion that we had dosed him in the other affair, in a way to sicken him; this time we should bring him to with a round turn!

The "old man" was pleased with the notion, I saw at a glance; and I confess it took my fancy also. We all felt very sore at the result of the other attempt, and here it seemed as if fortune gave us a good occasion for repairing the evil.

"There can be no harm in getting ready, Mr. Marble," the captain observed; "and when we are ready ourselves, we shall know better what to think of the matter."

This was no sooner said, than away we went to clear ship. Our task was soon done; the tompions were got out, the guns cast loose, ammunition was brought up, and a stand of grape was put in over the shot in every piece in both batteries, As the men were told the motive, they worked like dray-horses; and I do not

think we were ten minutes before the ship was ready to go into action at a moment's notice.

All this time Captain Williams refused to keep the ship away. I believe he wanted to get a look at our neighbor himself, for he could not but foresee what might be the consequences, should he run down in the fog, and engage a heavier vessel than his own, without the ceremony of a hail. The sea was covered with Englishmen, and one of their cruisers might not very easily pardon such a mistake, however honestly made. But preparation seems to infer a necessity for performance. When everything was ready, all eyes were turned aft in a way that human nature could hardly endure, and the captain was obliged to yield. As Marble, of all on board, had alone seen the other vessel, he was directed to con the *Crisis* in the delicate operation she was about to undertake.

As before, my station was on the forecastle. I had been directed to keep a bright lookout, as the enemy would doubtless be seen from forward. The order was unnecessary, however, for never did human beings gaze into a fog more anxiously than did all on board our ship on this occasion. Calculating by the distance, and the courses steered, we supposed ten or fifteen minutes would bring us square alongside of Mr. Marble's ship; though some among us doubted his having seen any vessel at all. There was about a five-knot breeze, and we had all our square sails set, knowing it was necessary to go a little faster than our adversary to catch up with him. The intense expectation, not to say anxiety, of such a scene, is not easily described. The surrounding fog, at times, seemed filled with ships; but all vanished into *thick* air, one after another, leaving nothing but vapor. Severe orders had been given for no one to call out, but, the moment the ship was seen, for the discoverer to go aft and report. At least a dozen men left their quarters on this errand, all returning in the next instant, satisfied they had been deceived. Each moment, too, increased the expectation; for each moment must we be getting nearer and nearer to her, if any vessel were really there. Quite twenty mintutes, however, passed in this manner, and no ship was seen.

Marble continued cool and confident, but the captain and second mate smiled, while the people began to shake their heads, and roll the tobacco into their cheeks. As we advanced, our own ship luffed by degrees, until we had got fairly on our old course again, or were sailing close upon the wind. This change was made easily, the braces not having been touched; a precaution that was taken expressly to give us the advantage. When we found ourselves once more close upon the wind, we gave the matter up forward, supposing the mate had been deceived. I saw by the expression of the captain's face that he was about to give the order to secure the guns, when casting my eyes forward, there was a ship, sure enough, within a hundred yards of us! I held up both arms, as I looked aft, and luckily caught the captain's eye. In an instant he was on the forecastle.

It was easy enough to see the stranger now. There he was in the fog, looking mystical and hazy; but there he was under his main-topgallant-sail, close-hauled, and moving ahead in all the confidence of the solitude of the ocean. We could not see his hull, or so faintly as only to distinguish its mass; but, from his tops up, there was no mistaking the objects. We had shot away the Frenchman's mizzen-royal-mast. It was a pole, and there the stump stood, just as it was when we had last seen him on the evening of the day of the combat. This left no doubt of the character of our neighbor, and it at once determined our course. As it was, we were greatly outsailing him, but an order was immediately given to set the light staysails. As Captain Williams passed aft, he gave his orders to the men in the batteries. In the meantime the second mate, who spoke very good New York French, came upon the forecastle in readiness to answer the expected hail. As the *Crisis* was kept a little free in or-

der to close, and as she sailed so fast, it was apparent we were coming up with the chase, hand over hand.

The two ships were not more than a hundred feet asunder when the Frenchman first saw us. This blindness was owing to several circumstances. In the first place, ten men look forward in a ship where one looks aft. Those who looked aloft, too, were generally on the quarter-deck, and this prevented them from looking astern. Then the Frenchman's crew had just gone to their breakfast, most of them eating below. She was so strong-handed, moreover, as to give a forenoon's watch below, and this still left many of the sluggards in their hammocks. In that day even a French ship-of-the-line was no model of discipline or order, and a letter-of-marque was consequently worse. As it afterward appeared, we were first seen by the mate of the watch, who ran to the taffrail, and, instead of giving an order to call all hands, he hailed us. Mr. Forbank, our second mate, answered; mumbling his words so that, if they were bad French, they did not sound like good English. He got out the name "*Le Hasard*, de Bordeaux," pretty plainly, however; and this served to mystify the mate for a few seconds. By the end of that time our bows were doubling on the Frenchman's quarter, and we were sheering into him so fast as quite to distract the Nantes man. The hail had been heard below, however, and the Frenchmen came tumbling up by the dozen, forward and aft.

Captain Williams was a prime seaman, and one of the coolest men that ever lived. Everything that day was done at precisely the proper moment. The Frenchman attempted to keep off, but our wheel was so touched as to keep us lapping in nearly a parallel line with them the whole time; and our forward sails soon becalmed even their mainsail. Of course, we went two feet to their one. Marble came on the forecastle just as our cathead was abreast of "The Lady's" forward rigging. Less than a minute was required to take us so far forward, and that minute was one of great confusion among the French. As soon as Marble got on the forecastle, he made a signal, the ensign was run up, and the order was given to fire. We let fly all five of our nine-pounders, loaded with two round and a stand of grape, at the same moment. At the next instant the crash of the ships coming foul of each other was heard. Marble shouted, "Come on, boys!" and away he, and I, and Neb, and all hands of us went on board of the Frenchman like a hurricane. I anticipated a furious hand-to-hand conflict; but we found the deck deserted, and had no difficulty whatever in getting possession. The surprise, the rush, and the effect of the broadside gave us an easy victory. The French captain had been nearly cut in two by a nine-pound shot, moreover, and both of the mates were severely wounded. These accidents contributed largely to our success, causing the enemy to abandon the defense as hopeless. We had not a soul hurt.

The prize proved to be the ship I have mentioned, a letter-of-marque, from Guadeloupe, bound to Nantes. She was a trifle larger than the *Crisis*, mounted twelve French nines, and had eighty-three souls on board when she sailed. Of these, however, no less than twenty-three had been killed and wounded in our previous affair with her, and several were absent in a prize. Of the wounded, nearly all were still in their hammocks. Among the remainder, some sixteen or eighteen suffered by our close and destructive broadside on the present occasion, reducing the efficient part of her crew to about our own numbers. The vessel was new and valuable, and her cargo was invoiced at something like sixty thousand dollars, having some cochineal among it.

As soon as assured of our victory, the *Crisis's* main-topsail was braced aback, as well as it could be, and her helm put down. At the same time, the *Dame* was kept away, and the two ships went clear of each other. Little injury had been done by the collision, or the grinding; and, in consequence of our guns having been so much shotted, no damage whatever was done the lower masts of the prize. The shot had just force enough to pass through the bulwarks, make splinters, and to

lodge. This left both vessels in good condition for going into port.

At first it was determined to leave me in *la Dame de Nantes*, as prize-master, with directions to follow the *Crisis* into Falmouth, whither she was bound for orders. But, on further examination, it was discovered that the crew of an American brig was on board the prize as prisoners; *la Dame de Nantes* having captured the vessel only two days before we met the former the first time, taken out her people, manned her, and ordered her for Nantes. These Americans, including the master and two mates, amounted to thirteen souls in all, and they enabled us to make a different disposition of the prize. The result of an hour or two's deliberations was as follows:

Our old second mate, whose hurt was likely to require better care than could be had on the northwest coast, was put on board the French ship as prize-master, with orders to make the best of his way to New York. The master and chief mate of the American brig agreed to act under him, and to assist in carrying *la Dame* across the ocean. Three or four of our invalids were sent home also, and the liberated Americans took service for the passage. All the French wounded were left in the ship, under the charge of their own surgeon, who was a man of some little merit, though a good deal of a butcher, as was too much the fashion of that day.

It was dark before all the arrangements were made, when *la Dame de Nantes* turned short round on her heel, and made sail for America. Of course our captain sent in his official report by her, and I seized a moment to write a short letter to Grace, which was so worded as to be addressed to the whole family. I knew how much happiness a line from me would bestow, and I had the pleasure to inform them, also, that I was promoted to be second mate—the second mate of the American brig having shipped as my successor in the rank of third officer.

The parting on the wide ocean that night was solemn, and, in some respects, sad. We knew that several who were in *la Dame de Nantes* would probably be left behind, as she traveled her long, solitary path, in the depths of the ocean; and there were the chances that she, herself, might never arrive. As respects the last, however, the odds were in her favor, the American coast being effectually cleared of French privateers by that time; and I subsequently received eleven hundred and seventy-three dollars for my share in that exploit. How I was affected by the circumstance, and what I did with the money, will appear in the sequel.

The *Crisis* made sail on a bowline, at the same moment her prize filled away for America; Miles Wallingford a much more important personage than he had been a few hours before. We put the prisoners below, keeping a good watch over them, and hauled off to the northward and westward, in order to avoid any French cruisers that might be hovering on their own coast. Captain Williams seemed satisfied with the share of glory he had obtained, and manifested no further disposition to seek renown in arms. As for Marble, I never knew a man more exalted in his own esteem than he was by the results of that day's work. It certainly did him great credit; but, from that hour, woe to the man who pretended to dispute with him concerning the character of any sail that happened to cross our path.

The day after we parted company with our prize, we made a sail to the westward, and hauled up to take a look at her, the wind having shifted. She was soon pronounced to be an American, but, though we showed our colors, the stranger, a brig, manifested no disposition to speak us. This induced Captain Williams to make sail in chase, more especially as the brig endeavored to elude us by passing ahead, and the run was pretty nearly on our course. At 4 P.M., we got near enough to throw a nine-pound shot between the fellow's masts, when the chase hove-to, and permitted us to come up. The brig proved to be the prize of *la Dame de Nantes*, and we took possession of her forthwith. As this vessel was loaded with flour, pot and pearl ashes, etc., and was bound to London, I was put in charge

of her, with a young man of my own age, of the name of Roger Talcott, for my assistant, having six men for my crew. Of course the Frenchmen, all but one who acted as cook and steward excepted, were received on board the *Crisis*. Neb went with me, through his own and my earnest entreaties, though spared by Marble with great reluctance.

This was my first command; and proud enough did I feel on the occasion, though almost dying with the apprehension of doing something wrong. My orders were, to make the Lizard light, and to crawl along up-Channel, keeping close in with the English coast; Captain Williams anticipating instructions to go to the same port to which the *Amanda* (the brig) was bound, and expecting to overtake us, after he had called at Falmouth for his orders. As the *Crisis* could go four feet to the *Amanda's* three, before sunset our old ship was hull down ahead of us.

When I took charge of the deck the next morning, I found myself on the wide ocean, with nothing in sight, at the age of eighteen, and in the enemy's seas, with a valuable vessel to care for, my way to find into narrow waters that I had never entered, and a crew on board, of whom just one half were now on their first voyage. Our green hands had manifested the aptitude of Americans, and had done wonders in the way of improvement, but a great deal still remained to be learned. The *Crisis's* complement had been too large to employ everybody at all sorts of work, as is usually done in a merchant vessel with her ordinary number of hands, and the landsmen had to take their chances for instruction. Notwithstanding, the men I got were stout, healthy, willing and able to pull and haul with the oldest salts.

By the arrangement that had been made, I was now thrown upon my own resources. Seamanship, navigation, address, prudence, all depended on me. I confess I was, at first, nearly as much depressed by the novelty and responsibility of my command as Neb was delighted. But it is surprising how soon we get accustomed to changes of this sort. The first five or six hours set me quite at my ease, though it is true nothing occurred in the least out of the usual way; and, by the time the sun set, I should have been happy, could I have got over the uneasiness produced by the darkness. The wind had got round to southwest, and blew fresh. I set a lower and a topmast studding-sail, and by the time the light had entirely vanished, the brig began to drag after her canvas in a way to keep me wide awake. I was at a loss whether to shorten sail or not. On the one hand, there was the apprehension of carrying away something; and, on the other, the fear of seeming timid in the eyes of the two or three seamen I had with me. I watched the countenances of these men, in order to glean their private sentiments; but, usually Jack relies so much on his officers that he seldom anticipates evils. As for Neb, the harder it blew, the greater was his rapture. He appeared to think the wind was Master Miles's, as well as the ocean, the brig, and himself. The more there was of each, the richer I became. As for Talcott, he was scarcely as good a seaman as myself, though he was well educated, had good manners, was well connected, and had been my original competitor for the office of third mate. I had been preferred only through the earnest recommendations of Marble. Talcott, however, was as expert a navigator as we had in the ship, and had been placed with me on that account; Captain Williams fancying two heads might prove better than one. I took this young man into the cabin with me, not only as a companion, but to give him consideration with the people forward. On shore, though less fortunate in the way of estate, he would have been considered as fully my equal in position.

Talcott and myself remained on deck together nearly the whole of the first night, and the little sleep I did get was caught in a topmast studding-sail that lay on the quarter-deck, and which I had determined not to set, after rousing it up for that purpose. When daylight returned, however, with a clear horizon, no increase of wind, and nothing in sight, I

was so much relieved as to take a good nap until eight. All that day we started neither tack nor sheet, nor touched a brace. Toward evening I went aloft myself to look for land, but without success, though I knew, from our observation at noon, it could not be far off. Fifty years ago the longitude was the great difficulty with navigators. Both Talcott and myself did very well with the lunars, it is true; but there was no chance to observe, and even lunars soon get out of their reckoning among currents and tides. Glad enough, then, was I to hear Neb sing out "Light ahead!" from the fore-topsail-yard. This was about ten o'clock. I knew this light must be the Lizard, as we were too far to the eastward for Scilly. The course was changed so as to bring the light a little on the weather-bow; and I watched for its appearance to us on deck with an anxiety I have experienced, since, only in the most trying circumstances. Half an hour sufficed for this, and then I felt comparatively happy. A new beginner even is not badly off with the wind fresh at southwest, and the Lizard light in plain view on his weather-bow, if he happen to be bound up-Channel. That night, consequently, proved to be more comfortable than the previous.

Next morning there was no change, except in the brig's position. We were well in the Channel, had the land as close aboard as was prudent and could plainly see, by objects ashore, that we were traveling ahead at a famous rate. We went within a mile of the Eddystone, so determined was I to keep as far as possible from the French privateers. Next morning we were up abreast of the Isle of Wight; but the wind had got round to the southward and eastward, becoming much lighter, and so scant as to bring us on a taut bowline. This made England a lee-shore, and I began to be as glad to get off it as I had lately been to hug it.

All this time, it will be easily understood, that we kept a sharp lookout, on board the brig, for enemies. We saw a great many sail, particularly as we approached the Straits of Dover, and kept as much aloof from all as circumstances would allow. Several were evidently English vessels-of-war, and I felt no small concern on the subject of having some of my men impressed; for at that period, and for many years afterward, ships of all nations that traded with the English lost many of their people by this practice, and the American craft more than any other. I ascribed to our sticking so close to the coast, which we did as long as it was at all safe, the manner in which we were permitted to pass unnoticed, or, at least, undetained. But as we drew nearer to the narrow waters, I had little hope of escaping without being boarded. In the meanwhile, we made short stretches off the land, and back again all one day and night, working slowly to the eastward. We still met with no interruption. I was fast getting confidence in myself; handling the *Amanda*, in my own judgment, quite as well as Marble could have done it, and getting my green hands into so much method and practice that I should not have hesitated about turning round and shaping our course for New York, so far as the mere business of navigating the vessel was concerned.

The lights on the English coast were safe guides for our movements, and they let me understand how much we made or lost on a tack. Dungeness was drawing nearer slowly, to appearances, and I was beginning to look out for a pilot, when Talcott, who had the watch, about three in the morning, came with breathless haste into the cabin, to tell me there was a sail closing with us fast, and, so far as he could make her out in the darkness, she was lugger-rigged. This was startling news indeed, for it was almost tantamount to saying the stranger was a Frenchman. I did not undress at all, and was on deck in a moment. The vessel in chase was about half a mile distant on our lee-quarter, but could be plainly enough distinguished, and I saw at a glance she was a lugger. There were certainly English luggers; but all the traditions of the profession had taught me to regard a vessel of that particular rig as a Frenchman. I had heard of privateers from Dunkirk, Boulogne and various other

ports in France, running over to the English coast in the night, and making prizes, just as this fellow seemed disposed to serve us. Luckily, our head was toward the land, and we were looking about a point and a half to windward of the light on Dungeness, being also favored with a flood tide, so far as we could judge by the rapid drift of the vessel to windward.

My decision was made in a minute. I knew nothing of batteries, or where to seek protection; but there was the land, and I determined to make for it as fast as I could. By keeping the brig a good full, and making all the sail she could carry, I thought we might run ashore before the lugger could get alongside us. As for her firing, I did not believe she would dare to attempt that, as it might bring some English cruiser on her heels, and France was some hours' sail distant. The fore and mizzen-topgallant sails were set as fast as possible, the weather-braces pulled upon a little, the bowlines eased, and the brig kept a rap-full. The *Amanda* was no flyer, certainly; but she seemed frightened as much as we were ourselves, that night. I never knew her to get along so fast, considering the wind; and really there was a short time when I began to think she held her own, the lugger being jammed up as close as she could be. But this was all delusion, that craft coming after us more like a sea-serpent than a machine carried ahead by canvas. I was soon certain that escape from such a racer by sailing was altogether out of the question.

The land and light were now close aboard us, and I expected every moment to hear the brig's keel grinding on the bottom. At this instant I caught a faint glimpse of a vessel at anchor to the eastward of the point, and apparently distant about a quarter of a mile. The thought struck me that she might be an English cruiser, for they frequently anchored in such places; and I called out, as it might be instinctively, "Luff!" Neb was at the helm, and I knew by his cheerful answer that the fellow was delighted. It was lucky we luffed as we did, for, on coming to the wind, the vessel gave a scrape that was a fearful admonisher of what would have happened in another minute. The *Amanda* minded her helm beautifully, however, and we went past the nearest land without any further hints, heading up just high enough to fetch a little to windward of the vessel at anchor. At the next moment, the lugger, then about a cable's length from us, was shut in by the land. I was now in great hopes the Frenchman would be obliged to tack; but he had measured his distance well, and felt certain, it would seem, that he could lay past. He reasoned, probably, as Nelson is *said* to have reasoned at the Nile, and as some of his captains unquestionably *did* reason; that is, if there was water enough for us, there was water enough for him. In another minute I saw him, jammed nearly into the wind's eye, luffing past the point, and falling as easily into our wake as if drawn by attraction.

All this time, the night was unbroken by any sound. Not a hail, nor a call, our own orders excepted, and they had been given in low tones, had been audible on board the *Amanda*. As regards the vessel at anchor, she appeared to give herself no concern. There she lay, a fine ship, and, as I thought, a vessel-of-war, like a marine bird asleep on its proper element. We were directly between her and the lugger, and it is possible her anchor-watch did not see the latter. The three vessels were not more than half a cable's length asunder; that is, we were about that distance from the ship, and the lugger was a very little further from us. Five minutes must determine the matter. I was on the brig's forecastle, anxiously examining all I could make out on board the ship, as her size, and shape, and rig became slowly more and more distinct: and I hailed—

"Ship ahoy!"

"Hilloa! What brig's that?"

"An American, with a French privateer-lugger close on board me, directly in my wake. You had better be stirring!"

I heard the quick exclamation of "The devil there is!" "Bloody Yankees!" came next. Then followed the call of "all hands." It was plain enough my

notice had set everything in motion in that quarter. Talcott now came running forward to say he thought, from some movements on board the lugger, that her people were now first apprised of the vicinity of the ship. I had been sadly disappointed at the call for all hands on board the ship, for it was in the manner of a merchant-man, instead of that of a vessel-of-war. But we were getting too near to remain much longer in doubt. The *Amanda* was already sweeping up on the Englishman's bows, not more than forty yards distant.

"She is an English West Indiaman, Mr. Wallingford," said one of my oldest seamen, "and a running ship; some vessel that has deserted or lost her convoy."

"Do you *know* anything of the lugger?" demanded an officer from on board the ship, in a voice that was not very amicable.

"No more than you see; she has chased me, close aboard, for the last twenty minutes."

There was no reply to this for a moment, and then I was asked "to tack, and give us a little chance, by drawing him away for a few minutes. We are armed, and will come out to your assistance."

Had I been ten years older, experience in the faith of men, and especially of men engaged in the pursuit of gain would have prevented me from complying with this request—but, at eighteen, one views these things differently. It did appear to me ungenerous to lead an enemy in upon a man in his sleep, and not endeavor to do something to aid the surprised party; I answered "ay, ay," therefore, and tacked directly alongside of the ship. But the maneuver was too late, the lugger coming in between the ship and the brig, just as we began to draw ahead again, leaving him room, and getting a good look at us both. The Englishman appeared the most inviting, I suppose, for she up helm and went on board of him on his quarter. Neither party used their guns. We were so near, however, as plainly to understand the whole, to distinguish the orders and even to hear the blows that were struck by hand. It was an awful minute to us in the brig. The cries of the hurt reached us in the stillness of that gloomy morning, and oaths mingled with the clamor. Though taken by surprise, John Bull fought well; though we could see that he was overpowerd, however, just as the distance, and the haze that was beginning to gather thick around the land, shut in the two vessels from our view.

The disappearance of the two combatants furnished me with a hint how to proceed. I stood out three or four minutes longer, or a sufficient distance to make certain we should not be seen, and tacked again. In order to draw as fast as possible out of the line of sight, we kept the brig off a little, and then ran in toward the English coast, which was sufficiently distant to enable us to stand on in that direction some little time longer. This expedient succeeded perfectly; for, when we found it necessary to tack again, day began to dawn. Shortly after we could just discern the West Indiaman and the lugger standing off the land, making the best of their way toward the French coast. In 1799, it is possible that this bold Frenchman got his prize into some of his own ports, though three or four years later it would have been nearly a hopeless experiment. As for the *Amanda*, she was safe; and Nelson did not feel happier after his great achievement at the Nile, than I felt at the success of my own expedient. Talcott congratulated me and applauded me; and I believe all of us were a little too much disposed to ascribe to our own steadiness and address much that ought fairly to have been imputed to chance.

Off Dover we got a pilot, and learned that the ship captured was the *Dorothea*, a valuable West Indiaman that had stolen away from her convoy, and came in alone, the previous evening. She anchored under Dungeness at the first of the ebb, and, it seems, had preferred taking a good night's rest to venturing out in the dark, when the flood made. Her berth was a perfectly snug one, and the lugger would probably never have found her, had we not led her directly in upon her prey.

I was now relieved from all charge of the brig; and a relief I found it, between shoals, enemies, and the tides, of which I knew nothing. That day we got into the Downs, and came to. Here I saw a fleet at anchor; and a pretty stir it made among the men-of-war's men, when our story was repeated among them. I do think twenty of their boats were alongside of us, to get the facts from the original source. Among others who thus appeared, to question me, was one old gentleman, whom I suspected of being an admiral. He was in shore-dress, and came in a plain way; the men in his boat declining to answer any questions; but they paid him unusual respect. This gentleman asked me a great many particulars, and I told him the whole story frankly, concealing or coloring nothing. He was evidently much interested. When he went away, he shook me cordially by the hand, and said, "Young gentleman, you have acted prudently and well. Never mind the grumbling of some of our lads; they think only of themselves. It was your right and your duty to save your own vessel, if you could, without doing anything dishonorable; and I see nothing wrong in your conduct. But it's a sad disgrace to us to let these French rascals be picking up their crumbs in this fashion right under our hawse-holes."

CHAPTER X.

"How pleasant and how sad the turning tide
Of human life, when side by side
The child and youth begin to glide
Along the vale of years:
The pure twin-being for a little space,
With lightsome heart, and yet a graver face,
Too young for woe, though not for tears."

—ALLSTON.

WITH what interest and deference most Americans of any education regarded England, her history, laws and institutions, in 1799! There were a few exceptions—warm political partisans, and here and there an individual whose feelings had become imbittered by some particular incident of the Revolution—but surprisingly few, when it is recollected that the country was only fifteen years from the peace. I question if there ever existed another instance of as strong provincial admiration for the capital, as independent America manifested for the mother country, in spite of a thousand just grievances, down to the period of the war of 1812. I was no exception to the rule, nor was Talcott. Neither of us had ever seen England before we made the Lizard on this voyage, except through our minds' eyes; and these had presented quantities of beauties and excellences that certainly vanished on a nearer approach. By this I merely mean that we had painted in too high colors, as is apt to be the case when the imagination holds the pencil; not that there was any unusual absence of things worthy to be commended. On the contrary, even at this late hour, I consider England as a model for a thousand advantages, even to our own inappreciable selves. Nevertheless, much delusion was blended with our admiration.

English history was virtually American history; and everything on the land, as we made our way toward town, which the pilot could point out, was a source of amusement and delight. We had to tide it up to London, and had plenty of leisure to see all there was to be seen. The Thames is neither a handsome nor a very magnificent river; but it was amazing to witness the number of vessels that then ascended or descended it. There was scarce a sort of craft known to Christendom, a few of the Mediterranean excepted, that was not to be seen there; and as for the colliers, we drifted through a forest of them that seemed large enough to keep the town a twelvemonth in firewood, by simply burning their spars. The manner in which the pilot handled our brig, too, among the thousand ships that lay in tiers on each side of the narrow passage we had to thread, was perfectly surprising to me; resembling the management of a coachman in a crowded thoroughfare, more than the ordinary working of a ship. I can safely say I learned more in the Thames, in the way of keeping a vessel in command, and in doing what I pleased with her, than in the

whole of my voyage to Canton and back again. As for Neb, he rolled his dark eyes about in wonder, and took an occasion to say to me, "He'll make her talk, Masser Miles, afore he have done." I make no doubt the navigation from the Forelands to the bridge, as it was conducted thirty years since, had a great influence on the seamanship of the English. Steamers are doing away with much of this practice, though the colliers still have to rely on themselves. Coals will scarcely pay for tugging.

I had been directed by Captain Williams to deliver the brig to her original consignee, an American merchant established in the modern Babylon, reserving the usual claim for salvage. This I did, and that gentleman sent hands on board to take charge of the vessel, relieving me entirely from all further responsibility. As the captain in his letter had, inadvertently I trust, mentioned that he had put "Mr. Wallingford, his third mate," in charge, I got no invitation to dinner from the consigne; though the affair of the capture under Dungeness found its way into the papers, *via* Deal, I have always thought, with the usual caption of "Yankee Trick."

Yankee trick! This phrase, so often carelessly used, has probably done a great deal of harm in this country. The young and ambitious—there are all sorts of ambition, and, among others, that of being a rogue; as a proof of which, one daily hears people call envy, jealousy, covetousness, avarice, and half of the meaner vices, ambition—the young and *ambitious*, then, of this country too often think to do a *good* thing that shall have some of the peculiar merit of a certain other good thing that they have heard laughed at and applauded under this designation. I can account in no other manner for the great and increasing number of "Yankee tricks" that are of daily occurrence among us. Among other improvements in tastes, not to say in morals, that might be introduced into the American press, would be the omission of the histories of these rare inventions. As two-thirds of the editors of the whole country, however, are Yankees, I suppose they must be permitted to go on exulting in the cleverness of their race. We are indebted to the Puritan stock for most of our instructors—editors and schoolmasters—and when one coolly regards the prodigious progress of the people in morals, public and private virtue, honesty, and other estimable qualities, he must, indeed, rejoice in the fact that our masters so early discovered "a church without a bishop."

I had an opportunity while in London, however, of ascertaining that the land of our fathers, which, by the way, has archbishops, contains something besides an unalloyed virtue in its bosom. At Gravesend we took on board two custom-house officers (they always set a rogue to watch a rogue in the English revenue system), and they remained in the brig until she was discharged. One of these men had been a gentleman's servant, and he owed his place to his former master's interest. He was a miracle of custom-house integrity and disinterestedness, as I discovered in the first hour of our intercourse. Perceiving a lad of eighteen in charge of the prize, and ignorant that this lad had read a good deal of Latin and Greek under excellent Mr. Hardinge, besides being the heir of Clawbonny, I suppose he fancied he would have an easy time with him. The man's name was Sweeney.

Perceiving in me an eager desire to see everything, the brig was no sooner at her moorings than he proposed a cruise ashore. It was Sweeney who showed me the way to the consignee's, and, that business accomplished, he proposed that we should proceed on and take a look at St. Paul's, the Monument, and, as he gradually found my tastes more intellectual than he at first supposed, the wonders of the West End. I was nearly a week under the pilotage of the "Admirable Sweeney." After showing me the exteriors of all the things of mark about the town, and the interiors of a few that I was disposed to pay for, he descended in his tastes, and carried me through Wapping, its purlieus and its scenes of atrocities. I have always thought Sweeney was sounding me, and hoping to ascertain my true char-

acter by the course he took; and that he betrayed his motives in a proposition which he finally made, and which brought our intimacy to a sudden close. The result, however, was to let me into secrets I should probably have never learned in any other manner. Still, I had read and heard too much to be easily duped; and I kept myself not only out of the power of my tempter, but out of the power of all that could injure me, remaining simply a curious observer of what was placed before my eyes. Good Mr. Hardinge's lessons were not wholly forgotten; I could run away from him much easier than from his precepts.

I shall never forget a visit I made to a house called the Black Horse, in St. Catherine's Lane. This last was a narrow street that ran across the site of the docks that now bear the same name; and it was the resort of all the local infamy of Wapping. I say *local* infamy; for there were portions of the West End that were even worse than anything which a mere port could produce. Commerce, that parent of so much that is useful to man, has its dark side, as everything else of earth; and, among its other evils, it drags after it a long train of low vice; but this train is neither so long nor so broad as that which is chained to the chariot-wheels of the great. Appearances excepted, and they are far less than might be expected, I think the West End could beat Wapping out and out in every essential vice; and, if St. Giles be taken into the account, I know of no salvo in favor of the land over the sea.

Our visit to the Black Horse was paid of a Sunday, that being the leisure moment of all classes of laborers, and the day when, being attired in their best, they fancied themselves best prepared to appear in the world. I will here remark, that I have never been in any portion of Christendom that keeps the Sabbath precisely as it is kept in America. In all other countries, even the most rigorously severe in their practices, it is kept as a day of recreation and rest, as well as of public devotion. Even in the American towns, the old observances are giving way before the longings or weaknesses of human nature; and Sunday is no longer what it was. I have witnessed scenes of brawling, blasphemy, and rude tumult in the suburbs of New York, on Sundays, within the last few years, that I have never seen in any other part of the world on similar occasions; and serious doubts of the expediency of the high-pressure principle have beset me, whatever may be the just constructions of doctrine. With the last I pretend not to meddle; but, in a worldly point of view, it would seem wise, if you cannot make men all that they ought to be, to aim at such social regulations as shall make them as little vile as possible. But, to return to the Black Horse in St. Catherine's Lane—a place whose very name was associated with vileness.

It is unnecessary to speak of the characters of its female visitors. Most of them were young, many of them were still blooming and handsome, but all of them were abandoned. "I need tell you nothing of these girls," said Sweeney, who was a bit of a philosopher in his way, ordering a pot of beer, and motioning me to take a seat at a vacant table—"but, as for the men you see here, half are housebreakers and pickpockets, come to pass the day genteelly among you gentlemen-sailors. There are two or three faces here that I have seen at the Old Bailey, myself; and how they have remained in the country is more than I can tell you. You perceive these fellows are just as much at their ease, and the landlord who receives and entertains them is just as much at *his* ease, as if the whole party were merely honest men."

"How happens it," I asked, "that such known rogues are allowed to go at large, or that this innkeeper dares to receive them?"

"Oh! you're a child yet, or you would not ask such a question! You must know, Master Wallingford, that the law protects rogues as well as honest men. To convict a pickpocket, you must have witnesses, and jurors to agree, and prosecutors and a sight of things that are not as plenty as handkerchiefs, or even wallets and Bank of England notes. Besides,

these fellows can prove an alibi any day in the week. An alibi, you must know——"

"I know very well what an alibi means, Mr. Sweeney."

"The deuce you do!" exclaimed the protector of the king's revenue, eying me a little distrustfully. "And pray, how should one as young as you, and coming from a new country like America, know that?"

"Oh!" said I, laughing, "America is just the country for *alibis*—everybody is everywhere, and nobody anywhere. The whole nation is in motion, and there is every imaginable opportunity for *alibis*."

I believe I owed the development of Sweeney's "ulterior views" to this careless speech. He had no other idea of the word than its legal signification; and it must have struck him as a little suspicious that one of my apparent condition in life, and especially of my years, should be thus early instructed in the meaning of this very useful professional term. It was a minute before he spoke again, having been all that time studying my countenance.

"And pray, Master Wallingford," he then inquired, "do you happen to know what *nolle prosequi* means too?"

"Certainly; it means to give up the chase. The French lugger under Dungeness entered a *nolle prosequi* as respects my brig, when she found her hands full of the West Indiaman."

"So, so; I find I have been keeping company all this time with a knowing one, and I such a simpleton as to fancy him green! Well, that I should live to be done by a raw Jonathan!"

"Poh, poh, Mr. Sweeney, I can tell you a story of two of our naval officers, that took place just before we sailed; and then you will learn that all hands of us, on the other side of the Big Pond, understand Latin. One of these officers had been engaged in a duel, and he found it necessary to lie hid. A friend and shipmate, who was in his secret, came one day in a great hurry to tell him that the authorities of the State in which the parties fought had 'entered a *nolle prosequi*' against the offenders. He had a newspaper with the whole thing in it, in print. 'What's a *nolle prosequi*, Jack?' asked Tom. 'Why, it's Latin, to be sure, and it means some infernal thing or other. We must contrive to find out, for it's half the battle to know who and what you've got to face.' 'Well, you know lots of lawyers, and dare show your face, so just step out and ask one.' 'I'll trust no lawyer; I might put the question to some chap who has been feed. But we both studied a little Latin when boys, and between us we'll undermine the meaning.' Tom assented, and to work they went. Jack had the most Latin, but, do all he could, he was not able to find a '*nolle*' in any dictionary. After a great deal of conjecture, the friends agreed it must be the root of 'knowledge,' and that point was settled. As for the '*prosequi*,' it was not so difficult as 'sequor' was a familiar word; and, after some cogitation, Jack announced his discoveries. 'If this thing were in English, now,' he said, 'a fellow might understand it. In that case, I should say that the sheriff's men were in "pursuit of knowledge;" that is, hunting after *you;* but Latin, you remember, was always an inverted sort of stuff, and that "*pro*" alters the whole signification. The paper says they've "*entered a nolle prosequi;*" and the "entered" explains the whole. "Entered a nolle" means have entered on the knowledge, got a scent; you see it is law English; "pro" means "how," and "sequi," "to give chase." The amount of it all is, Tom, that they are on your heels, and I must go to work and send you off, at once, two or three hundred miles into the interior, where you may laugh at them and their "nolle prosequis" together.'"*

Sweeney laughed heartily at this story, though he clearly did not take the joke, which I presume he fancied lay concealed under an American flash language, and he proposed, by way of finishing the day, to carry me to an entertainment where, he gave me to understand, American officers were fond of sometimes passing a few

* There is said to be foundation for this story.

minutes. I was led to a Wapping assembly room, on entering which I found myself in a party composed of some forty or fifty cooks and stewards of American vessels, all as black as their own pots, with partners of the usual color and bloom of English girls. I have as few prejudices of color as any American well can have, but I will confess this scene struck me as being painfully out of keeping. In England, however, nothing seemed to be thought of it; and I afterward found that marriages between English women, and men of all the colors of the rainbow, were very common occurrences.

When he had given me this ball as the climax of his compliments, Sweeney betrayed the real motive of all his attentions. After drinking a pot of beer extra, well laced with gin, he offered his services in smuggling anything ashore that the *Amanda* might happen to contain, and which I, as the prize-master, might feel a desire to appropriate to my own particular purposes. I met the proposal with a little warmth, letting my tempter understand that I considered his offer so near an insult, that it must terminate our acquaintance. The man seemed astounded. In the first place, he evidently thought all goods and chattels were made to be plundered, and then he was of opinion that plundering was a very common "Yankee trick." Had I been an Englishman, he might possibly have understood my conduct; but, with him, it was so much a habit to fancy an American a rogue, that, as I afterward discovered, he was trying to persuade the leader of a press-gang that I was the half-educated and illegitimate son of some English merchant, who wished to pass himself off for an American. I pretend not to account for the contradiction, though I have often met with the same moral phenomena among his countrymen; but here was as regular a rogue as ever cheated, who pretended to think roguery indigenous to certain nations, among whom his own was not included.

At length I was cheered with the sight of the *Crisis*, as she came drifting through the tiers, turning and twisting, and glancing along, just as the *Amanda* had done before her. The pilot carried her to moorings quite near us; and Talcott, Neb and I were on board her before she was fairly secured. My reception was very favorable, Captain Williams having seen the account of the "Yankee trick" in the papers; and, understanding the thing just as it had happened, he placed the most advantageous construction on all I had done. For myself, I confess I never had any misgivings on the subject.

All hands of us were glad to be back in the *Crisis* again. Captain Williams had remained at Falmouth longer than he expected, to make some repairs that could not be thoroughly completed at sea, which alone prevented him from getting into the river as soon as I did myself. Now the ship was in, we no longer felt any apprehension of being impressed, Sweeney's malignancy having set several of the gang upon the scent after us. Whether the fellow actually thought I was an English subject or not, is more than I ever knew; but I felt no disposition myself to let the point be called in question before my Lord Chief Justice of a Rendezvous. The King's Bench was more governed by safe principles, in its decisions, than the gentlemen who presided in these marine courts of the British navy.

As I was the only officer in the ship who had ever seen anything of London, my fortnight's experience made me a notable man in the cabin. It was actually greater preferment for me than when I was raised from third to be second mate. Marble was all curiosity to see the English capital, and he made me promise to be his pilot, as soon as duty would allow time for a stroll, and to show him everything I had seen myself. We soon got out the cargo, and then took in ballast for our northwest voyage; the articles we intended to traffic with on the coast being too few and too light to fill the ship. This kept us busy for a fortnight, after which we had to look about us to obtain men to supply the places of those who had been killed or sent away in *la Dame de Nantes*. Of course we preferred Americans; and this so much the more, as Englishmen were liable to be pressed at any moment. Fortu-

nately, a party of men that had been taken out of an American ship, a twelvemonth before, by an English cruiser, had obtained their discharges; and they all came to London for the double purpose of getting some prize money, and of obtaining passages home. These lads were pleased with the *Crisis* and the voyage, and, instead of returning to their own country, sailor-like, they took service to go nearly round the world. These were first-rate men—Delaware River seamen—and proved a great accession to our force. We owed the windfall to the reputation the ship had obtained by her affairs with the letter-of-marque; an account of which, copied from the log-book, and a little embellished by some one on shore, the consignee had taken care should appear in the journals. The history of the surprise, in particular, read very well; and the English were in a remarkably good humor, at that time, to receive an account of any discomfiture of a Frenchman. At no period since the year 1775 had the American character stood so high in England as it did just then; the two nations, for a novelty, fighting on the same side. Not long after we left London, the underwriters at Lloyd's actually voted a handsome compliment to an American commander for capturing a French frigate. Stranger things have happened than to have the day arrive when English and American fleets may be acting in concert. No one can tell what is in the womb of time; and I have lived long enough to know that no man can foresee who will continue to be his friends, or a nation what people may become its enemies.

The *Crisis* at length began to take in her bales and boxes for the northwest coast, and, as the articles were received slowly, or a few packages at a time, it gave us leisure for play. Our captain was in such good humor with us, on account of the success of the outward-bound passage, that he proved very indulgent. This disposition was probably increased by the circumstance that a ship arrived in a very short passage from New York, which spoke our prize; all well, with a smacking southerly breeze, a clear coast, and a run of only a few hundred miles to make. This left the almost moral certainty that *la Dame de Nantes* had arrived safe, no Frenchman being likely to trust herself on that distant coast, which was now alive with our own cruisers, going to or returning from the West Indies.

I had a laughable time in showing Marble the sights of London. We began with the wild beasts in the Tower as in duty bound; but of these our mate spoke very disparagingly. He had been too often in the east "to be taken in by such animals;" and, to own the truth, the cockneys were easily satisfied on the score of their *ménagerie*. We next went to the Monument; but this did not please him. He had seen a shot-tower in America—there was but one in that day—that beat it out and out as to height, and he thought in beauty, too. There was no reasoning against this. St. Paul's rather confounded him. He frankly admitted there was no such church at Kennebunk; though he did not know but Trinity, New York, "might stand up alongside of it." "Stand up alongside of it!" I repeated, laughing. "Why, Mr. Marble, Trinity, steeple and all, could stand up in it—*under* that dome—and then leave more room in this building than all the other churches in New York contain, put all together."

It was a long time before Marble forgave this speech. He said it was "unpatriotic;" a word which was less used in 1799 than it is used to-day, certainly, but which, nevertheless, *was* used. It often meant then, as now, a thick and thin pertinacity in believing in provincial marvels; and, in this, Marble was one of the most patriotic men with whom I ever met. I got him out of the church, and along Fleet Street, through Temple Bar, and into the Strand, however, in peace; and then we emerged into the arena of fashion, aristocracy and the court. After a time we worked our way into Hyde Park, where we brought up, to make our observations.

Marble was deeply averse to acknowledging all the admiration he really felt at the turnouts of London, as they were exhibited in the park, of a fine day, in their

season. It is probable the world elsewhere never saw anything approaching the beauty and magnificence that is here daily seen, at certain times, so far as beauty and magnificence are connected with equipages, including carriages, horses, and servants. Unable to find fault with the *tout ensemble*, our mate made a violent attack on the liveries. He protested it was indecent to put a "hired man"—the word *help* never being applied to the male sex, I believe, by the most fastidious New England purist — in a cocked hat; a decoration that ought to be exclusively devoted to the uses of ministers of the gospel, governors of States, and militia officers.

I had some notions of the habits of the great world, through books, and some little learned by observation and listening; but Marble scouted at most of my explanations. He put his own construction on everything he saw; and I have often thought, since, could the publishers of travels have had the benefit of his blunders, how many would have profited by them. Gentlemen were just then beginning to drive their own coaches; and I remember in a particular instance, an ultra in the new mode had actually put his coachman in the inside, while he occupied the dickey in person. Such a gross violation of the proprieties was unusual, even in London; but there sat Jehu, in all the dignity of cotton-lace, plush, and a cocked hat. Marble took it into his head that this man was the king, and no reasoning of mine could persuade him to the contrary. In vain I pointed out to him a hundred similar dignitaries, in the proper exercise of their vocation, on the hammercloths; he cared not a straw—this was not showing him one *inside;* and a gentleman inside of a carriage, who wore so fine a coat, and a cocked hat in the bargain, could be nothing less than some dignitary of the empire; and why not the king? Absurd as all this may seem, I have known mistakes, connected with the workings of our own institutions, almost as great, made by theorists from Europe.

While Marble and I were wrangling on this very point, a little incident occurred which led to important consequences in the end. Hackney-coaches, or any other public conveyance, short of post-chaises and post-horses, are not admitted into the English parks. But glass-coaches are, meaning by this term, which is never used in America, hired carriages that do not go on the stands. We encountered one of these glass-coaches in a very serious difficulty. The horses had got frightened by means of a wheelbarrow, aided, probably, by some bad management of the driver, and had actually backed the hind wheels of the vehicle into the water of the canal. They would have soon had the whole carriage submerged, and have followed it themselves, had it not been for the chief mate and myself. I thrust the wheelbarrow under one of the forward wheels just in time to prevent the final catastrophe; while Marble grasped the spoke with his iron gripe, and, together, he and the wheelbarrow made a resistance that counterbalanced the backward tendency of the team. There was no footman; and, springing to the door, I aided a sickly-looking elderly man, a female, who might very well have been his wife, and another that I took for his daughter, to escape. By my agency all three were put on the dry land, without even wetting their feet, though I fared worse myself. No sooner were they safe than Marble, who was up to his shoulders in the water, and who had made prodigious efforts to maintain the balance of power, released his hold, the wheelbarrow gave way at the same moment, and the whole affair, coach and horses, had their will, and went, stern foremost, overboard. One of the horses was saved, I believe, and the other drowned; but, a crowd soon collecting, I paid little attention to what was going on in the carriage, as soon as its cargo was discharged.

The gentleman we had saved pressed my hand with fervor, and Marble's too; saying that we must not quit him—that we must go home with him. To this we consented readily enough, thinking we might still be of use. As we all walked toward one of the more private entrances

of the park, I had an opportunity of observing the people we had served. They were very respectable in appearance; but I knew enough of the world to see that they belonged to what is called the middle class in England. I thought the man might be a soldier; while the two females had an air of great respectability, though not in the least of fashion. The girl appeared to be nearly as old as myself, and was decidedly pretty. Here, then, was an adventure! I had saved the life of a damsel of seventeen, and had only to fall in love to become the hero of a romance.

At the gate the gentleman stopped a hackney-coach, put the females in, and desired us to follow. But to this we would not consent, both being wet, and Marble particularly so. After short parley, he gave us an address in Norfolk Street, Strand; and we promised to stop there on our way back to the ship. Instead of following the carriage, however, we made our way on foot into the Strand, where we found an eating-house, turned in and ate a hearty dinner each, the chief mate resorting to some brandy in order to prevent his taking cold. On what principle this is done, I cannot explain, though I know it is often practiced, and in all quarters of the world.

As soon as we had dined and dried ourselves, we went into Norfolk Street. We had been told to ask for Major Merton, and this we did. The house was one of those plain lodging-houses, of which most of that part of the town is composed; and we found the major and his family in the occupation of the first floor, a mark of gentility on which some stress is laid in England. It was plain enough, however, to see that these people were not rolling in that splendor of which we had just seen so much in the park.

"I can trace the readiness and gallantry of the English tar in your conduct," observed the major, after he had given us both quite as warm a reception as circumstances required, at the same time taking out his pocket-book, and turning over some bank-notes. "I wish, for your sakes, I was better able than I am to reward you for what you have done; but twenty pounds is all I can now offer. At some other time circumstances may place it in my power to give further and better proofs of my gratitude."

As this was said, the major held two ten-pound notes toward Marble, doubtless intending that I should receive one of them as a fair division of the spoils. Now, according to all theory, and the established opinion of the Christian world, America is *the* avaricious country; the land, of all others, in which men are the most greedy of gain; in which human beings respect gold more, and themselves less, than in any other portion of this globe. I never dispute anything that is settled by the common consent of my fellow-creatures, for the simple reason that I know the decision must be against me; so I will concede that money *is* the great end of American life—that there is little else to live for in the great model republic. Politics have fallen into such hands that office will not even give social station; the people are omnipotent, it is true; but, though they can make a governor, they cannot make gentlemen and ladies; even kings are sometimes puzzled to do that; literature, arms, arts, and fame of all sorts are unattainable in their rewards among us, as in other nations, leaving the puissant dollar in its undisturbed ascendency; still, as a rule, twenty Europeans can be bought with two ten-pound Bank of England notes much easier than two Americans. I leave others to explain the phenomenon; I only speak of the *fact*.

Marble listened to the major's speech with great attention and respect, fumbling in his pocket for his tobacco-box the whole time. The box was opened just as the major ended, and even I began to be afraid that the well-known cupidity of Kennebunk was about to give way before the temptation, and the notes were to be stowed alongside of the tobacco; but I was mistaken. Deliberately helping himself to a quid, the chief mate shut the box again, and then he made his reply.

"Quite ginerous in you, major," he said, "and all ship-shape and right. I like to see things done just in that way.

Put up the money; we thank you as much as if we could take it, and that squares all accounts. I would just mention, however, to prevent mistakes, as the other idee might get us impressed, that this young man and I are both born Americans—he from up the Hudson somewhere and I from York city itself, though edicated down East."

"Americans!" resumed the major, drawing himself up a little stiffly; "then *you*, young man," turning to me, and holding out the notes, of which he now seemed as anxious to be rid, as I had previously fancied he was sorry to see go —"*you* will do me the favor to accept of this small token of my gratitude."

"It is quite impossible, sir," I answered, respectfully. "We are not exactly what we seem, and you are probably deceived by our roundabouts; but we are the first and second officers of a letter-of-marque."

At the word "officers," the major drew back his hand, and hastily apologized. He did not understand us even then, I could plainly see; but he had sufficient sagacity to understand that his money would not be accepted. We were invited to sit down, and the conversation continued.

"Master Miles, there," resumed Marble, "has an estate, a place called Clawbonny, somewhere up the Hudson; and he has no business to be sailing about the world in jacket and trousers, when he ought to be studying law, or trying his hand at college. But as the old cock crows, the young 'un l'arns; his father was a sailor before him, and I suppose that's the reason on't."

This announcement of my position ashore did me no harm, and I could see a change in the deportment of the whole family—not that it had ever treated me haughtily, or even coldly; but it now regarded me as more on a level with itself. We remained an hour with the Mertons, and I promised to repeat the call before we sailed. This I did a dozen times, at least; and the major, finding, I suppose, that he had a tolerably well-educated youth to deal with, was of great service in putting me in a better way of seeing London. I went to both theaters with the family, taking care to appear in a well-made suit of London clothes, in which I made quite as respectable a figure as most of the young men I saw in the streets. Even Emily smiled when she first saw me in my long togs, and I thought she blushed. She was a pretty creature; gentle and mild in her ordinary deportment, but full of fire and spirit at the bottom, as I could see by her light-blue English eye. Then she had been well educated; and in my young ignorance of life, I fancied she knew more than any girl of seventeen I had ever met with. Grace and Lucy were both clever, and had been carefully taught by Mr. Hardinge; but the good divine could not give two girls, in the provincial retirement of America, the cultivation and accomplishments that were within the reach of even moderate means in England. To me, Emily Merton seemed a marvel in the way of attainments; and I often felt ashamed of myself, as I sat at her side, listening to the natural and easy manner in which she alluded to things, of which I then heard for the first time.

CHAPTER XI.

"Boatswain!"
"Here, master: what cheer?"
"Good: speak to the marines; fall to 't
Yarely, or we run ourselves aground:
bestir, bestir."—TEMPEST.

As Captain Williams wished to show me some favor for the manner in which I had taken care of the brig, he allowed me as much time ashore as I asked for. I might never see London again; and, understanding I had fallen into good company, he threw no obstacle in the way of my profiting by it. So careful was he, indeed, as to get one of the consul's clerks to ascertain who the Mertons were, lest I should become the dupe of the thousands of specious rogues with which London abounds. The report was favorable, giving us to understand that the major had been much employed in the West Indies, where he

still held a moderately lucrative, semi-military appointment, being then in England to settle certain long and vexatious accounts, as well as to take Emily, his only child, from school. He was expected to return to the old, or some other post, in the course of a few months. A portion of this I gleaned from Emily herself, and it was all very fairly corroborated by the account of the consul's clerk. There was no doubt that the Mertons were persons of respectable position; without having any claims, however, to be placed very high. From the major, moreover, I learned he had some American connections, his father having married in Boston.

For my part, I had quite as much reason to rejoice at the chance which threw me in the way of the Mertons, as they had. If I was instrumental in saving their lives, as was undeniably the case, they taught me more of the world, in the ordinary social sense of the phrase, than I had learned in all my previous life. I make no pretensions to having seen London society; that lay far beyond the reach of Major Merton himself, who was born the son of a merchant, when merchants occupied a much lower position in the English social scale than they do to-day, and had to look to a patron for most of his own advancement. But he was a gentleman; maintained the notions, sentiments, and habits of the caste; and was properly conscious of my having saved his life when it was in great jeopardy. As for Emily Merton, she got to converse with me with the freedom of a friend; and very pleasant it was to hear pretty thoughts expressed in pretty language, and from pretty lips. I could perceive that she thought me a little rustic and provincial; but I had not been all the way to Canton to be browbeaten by a cockney girl, however clever and handsome. On the whole —and I say it without vanity at this late day—I think the impression left behind me, among these good people, was favorable. Perhaps Clawbonny was not without its influence; but, when I paid my last visit, even Emily looked sorrowful, and her mother was pleased to say they should all miss me much. The major made me promise to hunt him up, should I ever be in Jamaica, or Bombay; for one of which places he expected to sail himself, with his wife and daughter, in the course of a few months. I knew he had had one appointment, though he might receive another, and hoped everything would turn out for the best.

The *Crisis* sailed on her day; and she went to sea from the Downs, a week later, with a smacking southerly wind. Our Philadelphians turned out a noble set of fellows; and we had the happiness of beating an English sloop-of-war, just as we got clear of the Channel, in a fair trial of speed. To lessen our pride a little, a two-decker that was going to the Mediterranean treated us exactly in the same manner, only three days later. What made this last affair more mortifying, was the fact that Marble had just satisfied himself, and all hands, that a sloop-of-war, being the fastest description of vessel, and we having got the better of one of them, it might be fairly inferred we could out-sail the whole British navy. I endeavored to console him by reminding him that "the race was not always to the swift." He growled out some sort of an answer, denouncing all sayings, and desiring to know out of what book I had picked up that nonsense.

I have no intention of dwelling on every little incident that occurred on the long road we were now traveling. We touched at Madeira, and landed an English family that went there for the benefit of an invalid; got some fruit, fresh meat, and vegetables, and sailed again. Our next stopping place was Rio, whither we went for letters from home, the captain being taught to expect them. The ship's letters were received, and they were filled with eulogiums on our good conduct, having been written after the arrival of *la Dame de Nantes;* but great was my disappointment at finding there was not even a scrawl for myself.

Our stay at Rio was short, and we left port with a favorable slant of wind, running as far south as 50° in a very short time. As we drew near to the southern

extremity of the American continent, however, we met with heavy weather and foul winds. We were now in the month that corresponds to November in the northern hemisphere, and had to double the Horn at that unpropitious season of the year, going westward. There is no part of the world of which navigators have given accounts so conflicting, as of this celebrated passage. Each man appears to have described it as he found it, himself, while no two seem to have found it exactly alike. I do not remember to have ever heard of calms off Cape Horn; but light winds are by no means uncommon, though tempests are undoubtedly the predominant characteristic. Our captain had already been round four times, and he held the opinion that the season made no difference, and that it was better to keep near the land. We shaped our course accordingly for Staten Land, intending to pass through the straits of Le Maire and hug the Horn as close as possible in doubling it.

We made the Falkland Islands, or West Falkland rather, just as the sun rose, one morning, bearing a little on our weather-quarter, with the wind blowing heavily at the eastward. The weather was thick, and, what was still worse, there was so little day, and no moon, that it was getting to be ticklish work to be standing for a passage as narrow as that we aimed at. Marble and I talked the matter over, between ourselves, and wished the captain could be persuaded to haul up and try to go to the eastward of the island, as was still possible, with the wind where it was. Still, neither of us dared propose it; I, on account of my youth, and the chief mate, as he said, on account of "the old fellow's obstinacy." "He likes to be poking about in such places," Marble added, "and is never so happy as when he is running round the ocean in places where it is full of unknown islands, looking for sandal wood and bêche-la-mar! I'll warrant you, he'll give us a famous time of it, if he ever gets up on the northwest coast." Here the consultation terminated, we mates believing it wiser to let things take their course.

I confess to having seen the mountains on our weather-quarter disappear, with melancholy forebodings. There was little hope of getting any observation that day: and to render matters worse, about noon the wind began to haul more to the southward. As it hauled, it increased in violence, until, at midnight, it blew a gale: the commencement of such a tempest as I had never witnessed in any of my previous passages at sea. As a matter of course, sail was reduced as fast as it became necessary, until we had brought the ship down to a close-reefed main-topsail, and fore-topmast staysail, the fore-course, and the mizzen staysail. This was old-fashioned canvas; the more recent spencer being then unknown.

Our situation was now far from pleasant. The tides and currents, in that high latitude, run with great velocity; and then, at a moment when it was of the greatest importance to know precisely where the ship was, we were left in the painful uncertainty of conjecture, and theories that might be very wide of the truth. The captain had nerve enough, notwithstanding, to keep on the larboard tack until daylight, in the hope of getting in sight of the mountains of Tierra del Fuego. No one now expected we should be able to fetch through the straits; but it would be a great relief to obtain a sight of the land, as it would enable us to get some tolerably accurate notions of our position. Daylight came at length, but it brought no certainty. The weather was so thick, between a drizzling rain, sea-mist, and the spray, that it was seldom we could see a league around us, and frequently not half a mile. Fortunately, the general direction of the eastern coast of Tierra del Fuego is from northwest to southeast, always giving us room to wear off-shore, provided we did not unexpectedly get embarrassed in some of the many deep indentations of that wild and inhospitable shore.

Captain Williams showed great steadiness in the trying circumstances in which we were placed. The ship was just far enough south to render it probable she could weather Falkland Islands on the other tack, could we rely upon the cur-

rents; but it would be ticklish work to undertake such a thing in the long, intensely dark nights we had, and thus run the risk of finding ourselves on a lee-shore. He determined, therefore, to hold on as long as possible on the tack we were on, expecting to get through another night without coming upon the land, every hour now giving us the hope that we were drawing near to the termination of the gale. I presume he felt more emboldened to pursue this course, by the circumstance that the wind evidently inclined to haul, little by little, more to the southward, which was not only increasing our chances of laying past the islands, but lessened the danger from Tierra del Fuego.

Marble was exceedingly uneasy during that second night. He remained on deck with me the whole of the morning watch; not that he distrusted my discretion in the least, but because he distrusted the wind and the land. I never saw him in so much concern before, for it was his habit to consider himself a timber of the ship, that was to sink or swim with the craft.

"Miles," said he, "you and I know something of these 'bloody currents,' and we know they take a ship one way, while she looks as fiercely the other as a pig that is dragged aft by the tail. If we had run down the 50th degree of longitude, now, we might have had plenty of sea-room, and been laying past the cape with this very wind; but no, the old fellow would have had no islands in that case, and he never could be happy without half a dozen islands to bother him."

"Had we run down the 50th degree of longitude," I answered, "we should have had twenty degrees to make to get round the Horn; whereas, could we only lay through the Straits of Le Maire, six or eight of those very same degrees would carry us clear of everything."

"Only lay through the Straits of Le Maire, on the 10th November, or, what is the same thing in this quarter of the world, of May, and with less than nine hours of daylight! And such daylight too! Why, our Newfoundland fogs, such stuff as I used to eat when a youngster and a fisherman, are high noon to it! Soundings are out of the question hereabouts; and before one has hauled in the deep-sea, with all its line out, his cut-water may be on a rock. This ship is so weatherly and drags ahead so fast, that we shall see *terra firma* before any one has a notion of it. The old man fancies, because the coast of Fuego trends to the northwest, that the land will fall away from us as fast as we draw toward it. I hope he may live long enough to persuade all hands that he is right!"

Marble and I were conversing on the forecastle at the time, our eyes turned to the westward, for it was scarcely possible for him to look in any other direction, when he interrupted himself by shouting out, "Hard up with the helm—spring to the after-braces, my lads—man mizzen-staysail downhaul!" This set everybody in motion, and the captain and third mate were on deck in a minute. The ship fell off, as soon as we got the mizzen-staysail in, and the main-topsail touching. Gathering way fast, as she got the wind more aft, her helm threw her stern up, and away she went like a top. The fore-topmast staysail-sheet was tended with care, and yet the cloth emitted a sound like the report of a swivel, when the sail first filled on the other tack. We got the starboard fore-tack forward, and the larboard sheet aft, by two tremendously severe drags, the blocks and bolts seeming fairly to quiver as they felt the strains. Everything succeeded, however, and the *Crisis* began to drag off from the coast of Tierra del Fuego of a certainty; but to go whither, no one could precisely tell. She headed up nearly east, the wind playing about between south-and-by-east, and south-east-and-by-south. On that course I own I had now great doubt whether she could lay past the Falkland Islands, though I felt persuaded we must be a long distance from them. There was plenty of time before us to take the chances of a change.

As soon as the ship was round, and trimmed by the wind on the other tack, Captain Williams had a grave conversation with the chief mate on the subject of his reason for what he had done. Marble

maintained that he had caught a glimpse of the land ahead—"just as you know I did of *la Dame de Nantes*, Captain Williams," he continued; "and seeing there was no time to be lost, I ordered the helm hard up, to wear off shore." I distrusted this account, even while it was in the very process of coming out of the chief mate's mouth, and, Marble afterward admitted to me, quite justly; but the captain either was satisfied, or thought it prudent to seem so. By the best calculations I afterward made, I suppose we must have been from fifteen to twenty leagues from the land when we wore ship; but as Marble said, when he made his private confession, "Madagascar was quite enough for me, Miles, without breaking our nose on this sea-gull coast; and there may be 'bloody currents' on this side of the Cape of Good Hope, as well as on the other. We've just got so much of a gale and a foul wind to weather, and the ship will do both quite as well with her head to the eastward, as with her head to the westward."

All that day the *Crisis* stood on the starboard tack, dragging through the raging waters as it might be by violence; and just as night shut in again, she wore round, once more, with her head to the westward. So far from abating, the wind increased, and toward evening we found it necessary to furl our topsail and forecourse. Mere rag of a sail as the former had been reduced to, with its four reefs in, it was a delicate job to roll it up. Neb and I stood together on the bunt, and never did I exert myself more than on that occasion. The foresail, too, was a serious matter, but we got both in without losing either. Just as the sun set, or as night came to increase the darkness of that gloomy day, the fore-topmast staysail went out of the bolt-rope, with a report that was heard all over the ship, disappearing in the mist like a cloud driving in the heavens. A few minutes later, the mizzen-staysail was hauled down in order to prevent it from traveling the same road. The jerks even this low canvas occasionally gave the ship made her tremble from her keel to her trucks.

For the first time I now witnessed a tempest at sea. Gales, and pretty hard ones, I had often seen; but the force of the wind on this occasion as much exceeded that in ordinary gales of wind, as the force of these had exceeded that of a whole-sail breeze. The seas seemed crushed, the pressure of the swooping atmosphere, as the currents of the air went howling over the surface of the ocean, fairly preventing them from rising; or, where a mound of water did appear, it was scooped up and borne off in spray, as the ax dubs inequalities from the log. In less than an hour after it began to blow the hardest there was no very apparent swell—the deep breathing of the ocean is never entirely stilled—and the ship was as steady as if hove half out, her lower yardarms nearly touching the water, an inclination at which they remained as steadily as if kept there by purchases. A few of us were compelled to go as high as the futtock-shrouds to secure the sails, but higher it was impossible to get. I observed that when I thrust out a hand to clutch anything, it was necessary to make the movement in such a direction as to allow for lee-way, precisely as a boat quarters the stream in crossing against a current. In ascending it was difficult to keep the feet on the ratlines, and in descending it required a strong effort to force the body down toward the center of gravity. I make no doubt, had I groped my way up to the cross-trees, and leaped overboard, my body would have struck the water thirty or forty yards from the ship. A marlinspike falling from either top would have endangered no one on deck.

When the day returned, a species of lurid, somber light was diffused over the watery waste, though nothing was visible but the ocean and the ship. Even the sea-birds seemed to have taken refuge in the caverns of the adjacent coast, none reappearing with the dawn. The air was full of spray, and it was with difficulty that the eye could penetrate as far into the humid atmosphere as half a mile. All hands mustered on deck as a matter of course, no one wishing to sleep at a time like that. As for us officers, we collected

on the forecastle, the spot where danger would first make itself apparent, did it come from the side of the land.

It is not easy to make a landsman understand the embarrassments of our situation. We had had no observations for several days, and had been moving about by dead reckoning, in a part of the ocean where the tides run like a mill-tail, with the wind blowing a little hurricane. Even now, when her bows were half submerged, and without a stitch of canvas exposed, the *Crisis* drove ahead at the rate of three or four knots, luffing as close to the wind as if she carried after-sail.

It was Marble's opinion that, in such smooth water, do all we could, the vessel would drive toward the much-dreaded land again, between sun and sun of that short day, a distance of from thirty to forty miles. "Nor is this all, Miles," he added to me, in an aside; "I no more like this 'bloody current,' than that we had over on the other side of the pond, when we broke our back on the rocks of Madagascar. You never see as smooth water as this, unless when the wind and current are traveling in the same direction." I made no reply, but there all four of us, the captain and his three mates, stood looking anxiously into the vacant mist on our leebow, as if we expected every moment to behold our homes. A silence of ten minutes succeeded, and I was still gazing in the same direction, when by a sort of mystic rising of the curtain, I fancied I saw a beach of long extent, with a dark-looking waste of low bottom extending inland, for a considerable distance. The beach did not appear to be distant half a knot, while the ship seemed to glide along it, as compared with visible objects on shore, at a rate of six or eight miles the hour. It extended almost in a parallel line with our course, too, as far as could be seen, both astern and ahead.

"What a strange delusion is this!" I thought to myself, and turned to look at my companions, when I found all looking one at the other, as if to ask a common explanation.

"There is no mistake here," said Captain Williams, quietly. "That is *land*, gentlemen."

"As true as the gospel," answered Marble, with the sort of steadiness despair sometimes gives. "What is to be done, sir?"

"What *can* be done, Mr. Marble? We have not room to wear, and, of the two, there seems, so far as I can judge, more sea-room ahead than astern."

This was so apparent, there was no disputing it. We could still see the land, looking low, chill, and of the hue of November; and we could also perceive that ahead, if anything, it fell off a little toward the northward, while astern it seemingly stretched in a due line with our course. That we passed it with great velocity, too, was a circumstance that our eyes showed us too plainly to admit of any mistake. As the ship was still without a rag of sail, borne down by the wind as she had been for hours, and burying to her hawse-holes forward, it was only to a racing tide, or current of some sort, that we could be indebted for our speed. We tried the lead, and got bottom in six fathoms!

The captain and Marble now held a serious consultation. That the ship was entering some sort of an estuary was certain, but of what depth, how far favored by a holding-ground, or how far without any anchorage at all, were facts that defied our inquiries. We knew that the land called Tierra del Fuego was, in truth, a cluster of islands, intersected by various channels and passages, into which ships had occasionally ventured, though their navigation had never led to any other results than some immaterial discoveries in geography. That we were entering one of these passages, and under favorable circumstances, though so purely accidental, was the common belief; and it only remained to look out for the best anchorage, while we had daylight. Fortunately, as we drove into the bay, or passage, or whatever it was, the tempest lifted less spray from the water, and, owing to this and other causes, the atmosphere gradually grew clearer. By ten o'clock, we could see fully a league, though I can hardly say

that the wind blew less fiercely than before. As for sea, there was none, or next to none; the water being as smooth as in a river.

The day drew on, and we began to feel increased uneasiness at the novelty of our situation. Our hope and expectation were to find some anchorage; but to obtain this it was indispensable also to find a lee. As the ship moved forward, we still kept the land in view, on our starboard hand, but that was a lee, instead of a weather-shore; the last alone could give our ground-tackle any chance whatever in such a tempest. We were drawing gradually away from this shore, too, which trended more northerly, giving us additional sea-room. The fact that we were in a powerful tide's way, puzzled us the most. There was but one mode of accounting for the circumstance. Had we entered a bay, the current must have been less, and it seemed necessary there should be some outlet to such a swift accumulation of water. It was not the mere rising of the water, swelling in an estuary, but an arrow-like glancing of the element, as it shot through a pass. We had a proof of this last fact about eleven o'clock, that admitted of no dispute. Land was seen directly ahead, at that hour, and great was the panic it created. A second look, however, reassured us, the land proving to be merely a rocky islet of some six or eight acres in extent. We gave it a berth, of course, though we examined closely for an anchorage near it, as we approached. The islet was too low and too small to make any lee, nor did we like the looks of the holding-ground. The notion of anchoring there was consequently abandoned; but we had now some means of noting our progress. The ship was kept a little away, in order to give this island a berth, and the gale drove her through the water at the rate of seven or eight knots. This, however, was far from being our whole speed, the tide sweeping us onward at a furious rate, in addition. Even Captain Williams thought we must be passing that rock at the rate of fifteen knots!

It was noon, and there was no abatement in the tempest, no change in the current, no means of returning, no chance of stopping; away we were driven, like events ruled by fate. The only change was the gradual clearing up of the atmosphere, as we receded from the ocean, and got further removed from its mists and spray. Perhaps the power of the gale had, in a small degree, abated by two o'clock, and it would have been possible to carry some short sail; but, there being no sea to injure us, it was unnecessary, and the ship continued to drive ahead under bare poles. Night was the time to dread.

There was now but one opinion among us, and that was this; we thought the ship had entered one of the passages that intersect Tierra del Fuego, and that there was the chance of soon finding a lee, as these channels were known to be very irregular and winding. To run in the night seemed impossible; nor was it desirable, as it was almost certain we should be compelled to return by the way we had entered, to extricate ourselves from the dangers of so intricate a navigation. Islands began to appear, moreover, and we had indications that the main passage itself was beginning to diminish in width. Under the circumstances, therefore, it was resolved to get everything ready, and to let go two anchors as soon as we could find a suitable spot. Between the hours of two and four, the ship passed seventeen islets, some of them quiet near; but they afforded no shelter. At last, and it was time, the sun beginning to fall very low, as we could see by the waning light, we saw an island of some height and size ahead, and we hoped it might afford us a lee. The tide had changed, too, and that was in our favor. Turning to windward, however, was out of the question, since we could carry no sail, and the night was near. Anchor, then, we must, or continue to drive onward in the darkness, sheered about in all directions by a powerful adverse current. It is true, this current would have been a means of safety, by enabling us to haul up from rocks and dangers ahead, could we carry any canvas; but it still blew too violently for the last. To anchor, then, it was determined.

I had never seen so much anxiety in Captain Williams's countenance, as when he was approaching the island mentioned. There was still light enough to observe its outlines and shores, the last appearing bold and promising. As the island itself may have been a mile in circuit, it made a tolerable lee, when close to it. This was then our object, and the helm was put to starboard as we went slowly past, the tide checking our speed. The ship sheered into a sort of roadstead—a very wild one it was—as soon as she had room. It was ticklish work, for no one could tell how soon we might hit a rock; but we went clear, luffing quite near to the land, where we let go both bowers at the same instant. The ship's way had been sufficiently deadened, by throwing her up as near the wind as she could be got, and there was no difficulty in snubbing her. The lead gave us seven fathoms, and this within pistol-shot of the shore. We knew we were temporarily safe. The great point was to ascertain how the vessel would tend, and with how much strain upon her cables. To everybody's delight, it was found we were in a moderate eddy, that drew the ship's stern from the island, and allowed her to tend to the wind, which still had a fair range from her topsail yards to the trucks. Lower down, the tempest scuffled about, howling and eddying, and whirling first to one side, and then to the other, in a way to prove how much its headlong impetuosity was broken and checked by the land. It is not easy to describe the relief we felt at these happy chances. It was like giving foothold to some wretch who thought a descent of the precipice was inevitable.

The ship was found to ride easily by one cable, and the hands were sent to the windlass to heave up the other anchor, as our lead told us we had rocks beneath us, and the captain was afraid of the chafing. The larboard bower anchor was chatted immediately, and there it was left suspended, with a range of cable overhauled, in readiness to let go at a moment's notice. After this the people were told to get their suppers. As for us officers, we had other things to think of. The *Crisis* carried a small quarter-boat, and this was lowered into the water, the third mate and myself manned its oars, and away we went to carry the captain round the ship, in order that he might ascertain the soundings, should it be necessary to get under way in the night. The examination was satisfactory on all points but one, that in the holding-ground; and we returned to the vessel, having taken good care to trust ourselves in neither the wind nor the current. An anchor-watch was set, with a mate on deck, four hours and four hours, and all hands turned in.

I had the morning watch. What occurred from seven o'clock (the captain keeping the dog-watches himself), until a few minutes before four, I cannot tell in detail, though I understood generally, that the wind continued to blow in the same quarter, though it gradually diminished in violence, getting down to something like a mere gale, by midnight. The ship rode more easily; but when the flood came in, there was no longer an eddy, the current sucking round each side of the island in a very unusual manner. About ten minutes before the hour when it was my regular watch on deck, all hands were called; I ran on deck, and found the ship had struck adrift, the cable having parted. Marble had got the vessel's head up to the wind, under bare poles as before, and we soon began to heave in the cable. It was found that the mischief had been done by the rocks, the strands being chafed two-thirds through. As soon as the current took the vessel's hull with force, the cable parted. We lost our anchor, of course, for there was no possible way of getting back to the island at present, or until the ebb again made.

It wanted several hours of day, and the captain called a council. He told us, he made no doubt that the ship had got into one of the Tierra del Fuego passages, guided by Providence; and as he supposed we must be almost as far south as Staten Land, he was of opinion we had made an important discovery! Get back we could not, so long as the wind held where it was, and he was disposed to make sail, and push the examination of

the channel, as far as circumstances would allow. Captain Williams had a weakness on this point, that was amiable and respectable perhaps, but which hardly comported with the objects and prudence of a trading shipmaster. We were not surprised, therefore, at hearing his suggestion; and, in spite of the danger, curiosity added its impulses to our other motives of acquiescing. We could not get back as the wind then was, and we were disposed to move forward. As for the dangers of the navigation, they seemed to be lessening as we advanced, fewer islands appearing ahead, and the passage itself grew wider. Our course, however, was more to the southward, bringing the ship close up by the wind once more.

The morning promised to be lighter than we had found the weather for several days, and we even experienced some benefit from the moon. The wind, too, began to back round to the eastward again, as we approached the dawn; and we got the three topsails, close-reefed, the fore-course, and a new fore-topmast staysail, on the ship. At length day appeared, and the sun was actually seen struggling among dark masses of wild-looking, driving clouds. For the first time since we entered those narrow waters, we now got a good look around us. The land could be seen in all directions.

The passage in which we found the *Crisis*, at sunrise on the morning of the second of these adventurous days, was of several leagues in width; and bounded, especially on the north, by high, precipitous mountains, many of which were covered with snow.

The channel was unobstructed; and not an island, islet, or rock, was visible. No impediment to our proceeding offered, and we were still more encouraged to push on. The course we were steering was about south-southwest, and the captain predicted we should come out into the ocean to the *westward* of the Straits of Le Maire, and somewhere near the cape itself. We should unquestionably make a great discovery! The wind continued to back round, and soon got to be abaft the beam. We now shook our reefs out, one after another, and we had whole topsails on the vessel by nine o'clock. This was carrying hard, it must be owned; but the skipper was determined to make hay while the sun shone. There were a few hours, when I think the ship went fifteen knots by the land, being so much favored by the current. Little did we know the difficulties toward which we were rushing!

Quite early in the day land appeared ahead, and Marble began to predict that our rope was nearly run out. We were coming to the bottom of a deep bay. Captain Williams thought differently; and when he discovered a narrow passage between two promontories, he triumphantly predicted our near approach to the cape. He had seen some such shape to the mountains inland, in doubling the Horn, and the hilltops looked like old acquaintances. Unfortunately, we could not see the sun at meridian, and got no observation. For several hours we ran southwesterly, in a passage of no great width; when we came to a sudden bend in our course which led us away to the northwest. Here we still had the tide with us, and we then all felt certain that we had reached a point where the ebb must flow in a direction contrary to that in which we had found it in the other parts of the passage. It followed, that we were now half way through to the ocean, though the course we were steering predicted a sinuous channel. We were certainly not going now toward Cape Horn.

Notwithstanding the difficulties and doubts which beset us, Captain Williams packed on the ship, determined to get ahead as fast as he could, while there was light. It no longer blew a gale, and the wind was hauling more to the southward again. It soon got to be right aft, and before sunset it had a little westing in it. Fortunately it moderated and we set our main-sail and topgallant-sails. We had carried a lower and topmast studding-sails nearly all day. The worst feature in our situation, now, was the vast number of islands, or islets, we met. The shore on each side was mountainous and rude, and deep indentations were con-

stantly tempting us to turn aside. But, rightly judging that the set of the tide was a fair index to the true course, the captain stood on.

The night that followed was one of the most anxious I ever passed. We were tempted to anchor a dozen times, in some of the different bays, of which we passed twenty; but could not make up our minds to risk another cable. We met the flood a little after sunset, and got rid of it before morning. But the wind kept hauling, and at last it brought us fairly on a taut bowline; under the topgallant-sails, however. We had come too far to recede, or now would have been the time to turn round and retrace our steps. But we hoped every moment to reach some inclination south, again, that would carry us into the open sea. We ran a vast many chances of shipwreck, passing frightfully near several reefs; but the same good Providenee which had so far protected us, carried us clear. Never was I so rejoiced as when I saw day returning.

We had the young ebb, and a scant wind, when the sun rose next day. It was a brilliant morning, however, and everybody predicted an observation at noon. The channel was full of islands, still, and other dangers were not wanting; but, as we could see our way, we got through them all safely. At length our course became embarrassed, so many large islands, with passages between them, offering on different sides. One headland, however, lay before us; and, the ship promising to weather it, we held on our way. It was just ten o'clock as we approached this cape, and we found a passage westward that actually led into the ocean! All hands gave three cheers as we became certain of this fact, the ship tacking as soon as far enough ahead, and setting seaward famously with the tide.

Captain Williams now told us to get our quadrants, for the heavens were cloudless, and we should have a horizon in time for the sun. He was anxious to get the latitude of our discovery. Sure enough, it so fell out, and we prepared to observe; some predicting one parallel, some another. As for the skipper himself, he said he thought we were still to the eastward of the cape; but he felt confident that we had come out to the westward of Le Maire. Marble was silent; but he had observed, and made his calculations, before either of the others had commenced the last. I saw him scratch his head, and go to the chart which lay on the companion-way. Then I heard him shout—

"In the Pacific, by St. Kennebunk!"—he always swore by this pious individual when excited. "We have come through the Straits of Magellan without knowing it!"

CHAPTER XII.

"Sound trumpets, ho!—weigh anchor—
loosen sail—
The seaward-flying banners chide delay;
As if 'twere heaven that breathes this
kindly gale,
Our life-bark beneath it speeds away."
—PINKNEY.

THE stout ship *Crisis* had, like certain persons, done a good thing purely by chance. Had her exploit happened in the year 1519, instead of that of 1800, the renowned passage we had just escaped from would have been called the Crisis Straits, a better name than the mongrel appellation it now bears, which is neither English nor Portuguese. The ship had been lost, like a man in the woods, and came nearer home than those in her could have at all expected. The "bloody currents" had been at the bottom of the mistake, though this time they did good, instead of harm. Any one who has been thoroughly lost on a heath, or in a forest, or even in a town, can comprehend how the head gets turned on such occasions, and will understand the manner in which we had mystified ourselves.

I shall remember the feelings of delight with which I looked around me, as the ship passed out into the open ocean, to my dying day. There lay the vast Pacific, its long, regular waves rolling in toward the coast, in mountain-like ridges, it is true, but under a radiant sun, and in a bright atmosphere. Everybody was cheered by the view, and never did order

sound more pleasant in my ears, than when the captain called out in a cheerful voice "to man the weather-braces." This command was given the instant it was prudent; and the ship went foaming past the last cape, with the speed of a courser. Studding-sails were then set, and, when the sun was dipping, we had a good offing, were driving to the northward under everything we could carry, and had a fair prospect of an excellent run from the neighborhood of Tierra del Fuego and its stormy seas.

It is not my intention to dwell on our passage along the western coast of South America. A voyage to the Pacific was a very different thing in the year 1800, however, from what it is to-day. The power of Spain was then completely in the ascendant, intercourse with any nation but the mother country being strictly prohibited. It is true, a species of commerce, that was called the "forced trade on the Spanish Main," existed under that code of elastic morals which adapts the maxim of "your purse or your life" to modern diplomacy as well as to the habits of the highwayman. According to divers masters in the art of ethics now flourishing among ourselves, more especially in the atmosphere of the journals of the commercial communities, the people that "*can* trade and *won't* trade *must be made to trade.*" At the commencement of the century, your mercantile moralists were far less manly in the avowal of their sentiments, though their practices were in no degree wanting in the spirit of our more modern theories. Ships were fitted out, armed, and navigated, on this just principle, quite as confidently and successfully as if the tongue had declared all that the head had conceived.

Guarda-costas were the arguments used, on the other side of this knotty question, by the authorities of Spain; and a very insufficient argument, on the whole, did they prove to be. It is an old saying that vice is twice as active as virtue; the last sleeping, while the former is hard at work. If this be true of things in general, it is thrice true as regards smugglers and custom-house officers. Owing to this circumstance, and sundry other causes, it is certain that English and American vessels found the means of plundering the inhabitants of South America, at the period of which I am writing, without having recourse to the no longer reputable violence of Dampier, Wood, Rogers, or Drake. As I feel bound to deal honestly with the reader, whatever I may have done by the Spanish laws, I shall own that we made one or two calls as we proceeded north, shoving ashore certain articles purchased in London, and taking on board dollars in return for our civility. I do not know whether I am bound, or not, to apologize for my own agency in these irregular transactions—regular would be quite as apposite a word—for, had I been disposed to murmur, it would have done my morals no good, nor the smuggling any harm. Captain Williams was a silent man, and it was not easy to ascertain precisely what he *thought* on the subject of smuggling: but, in the way of *practice*, I never saw any reason to doubt that he was a firm believer in the doctrine of Free Trade. As for Marble, he put me in mind of a certain renowned editor of a well-known New York journal, who evidently thinks that all things in heaven and earth, sun, moon, and stars, the void above, and the caverns beneath us, the universe, in short, was created to furnish materials for newspaper paragraphs; the worthy mate just as confidently believing that coasts, bays, inlets, roadsteads, and havens were all intended by nature as means to run goods ashore wherever the duties or prohibitions rendered it inconvenient to land them in the more legal mode. Smuggling, in his view of the matter, was rather more creditable than the regular commerce, since it required greater cleverness.

I shall not dwell on the movements of the *Crisis* for the five months that succeeded her escape from the Straits of Magellan. Suffice it to say, that she anchored at as many different points on the coast; that all which came up the mainhatch, went ashore; and all that came over the bulwarks, was passed

down into the run. We were chased by *guarda-costas* seven times, escaping from them on each occasion with ease; though we had three little running fights. I observed that Captain Williams was desirous of engaging these emissaries of the law as easily as possible, ordering us to fire altogether at their spars. I have since thought that this moderation proceeded from a species of principle that is common enough—a certain half-way code of right and wrong—which encouraged him to smuggle, but which caused him to shrink from taking human life. Your half-way rogues are the bane of honesty.

After quitting the Spanish coast, altogether, we proceeded north, with the laudable intention of converting certain quantities of glass beads, inferior jack-knives, frying-pans, and other homely articles of the same nature, into valuable furs. In a word, we shaped our course for that district which bids fair to set the mother and daughter by the ears, one of these days, unless it shall happen to be disposed of *à la Texas*, or, what is almost as bad, *à la Maine*, ere long. At that time the whole northwest coast was unoccupied by white men, and I felt no scruples about trading with the natives who presented themselves with their skins as soon as we had anchored, believing that they had the best right to the country and its products. We passed months in this traffic, getting, at every point where we stopped, something to pay us for our trouble.

We went as far north as 53°, and that is pretty much all I ever knew of our last position. At the time, I thought we had anchored in a bay on the mainland, but I have since been inclined to think it was in one of the many islands that line that broken coast. We got a very secure berth, having been led to it by a native pilot who boarded us several leagues at sea, and who knew enough English to persuade our captain that he could take us to a point where sea-otter skins might be had for the asking. Nor did the man deceive us, though a more unpromising-looking guide never had charge of smuggling Christians. He carried us into a very small bay, where we found plenty of water, capital holding-ground, and a basin as smooth as a dock. But one wind—that which blew from the northwest—could make any impression on it, and the effects of even that were much broken by a small island that lay abreast of the entrance; leaving good passages, on each side of it, out to sea. The basin itself was rather small, it is true, but it did well enough for a single ship. Its diameter may have been three hundred yards, and I never saw a sheet of natural water that was so near a circle. Into a place like this, the reader will imagine, we did not venture without taking the proper precautions. Marble was sent in first, to reconnoiter and sound, and it was on his report that Captain Williams ventured to take the ship in.

At that time, ships on the northwest coast had to use the greatest precautions against the treachery and violence of the natives. This rendered the size of our haven the subject of distrust; for, lying in the middle of it, where we moored, we were barely an arrow's flight from the shore, in every direction but that which led to the narrow entrance. It was a most secure anchorage, as against the dangers of the sea, but a most insecure one as against the dangers of the savages. This we all felt as soon as our anchors were down; but, intending to remain only while we bartered for the skins which we had been told were ready for the first ship that should offer, we trusted to vigilance as our safeguard in the interval.

I never could master the uncouth sounds of the still more uncouth savages of that distant region. The fellow who carried us in had a name of his own, doubtless, but it was not to be pronounced by a Christian tongue, and he got the *sobriquet* of the Dipper from us, owing to the manner in which he ducked at the report of our muskets, which had been discharged by Marble merely with the intention to renew the cartridges. We had hardly got into the little basin, before the Dipper left us, returning in an hour, however, with a canoe loaded to the water's edge with beautiful skins, and accompanied by

three savages as wild-looking, seemingly as fierce, and certainly as avaricious as he was himself. These auxiliaries, through various little circumstances, were known among us that same afternoon, by the several appellations of Smudge, Tin-pot, and Slit-nose.

These were not heroic names, of a certainty, but their owners had as little of the heroic in their appearance as usually falls to the lot of man in the savage state. I cannot tell the designation of the tribes to which these four worthies belonged, nor do I know any more of their history and pursuits than the few facts which came under my own immediate observation. I did ask some questions of the captain, with a view to obtain a few ideas on this subject, but all he knew was, that these people put a high value on blankets, beads, gunpowder, frying-pans, and old hoops, and that they set a remarkably low price on sea-otter skins, as well as on the external coverings of sundry other animals. An application to Mr. Marble was still less successful, being met by the pithy answer that he was "no naturalist, and knew nothing about these critters, or any wild beasts, in general." Degraded as the men certainly were, however, we thought them quite good enough to be anxious to trade with them. Commerce, like misery, sometimes makes a man acquainted with strange bed-fellows.

I had often seen our own Indians after they had become degraded by their intercourse with the whites and the use of rum, but never had I beheld any beings so low in the scale of the human race, as the northwestern savages appeared to be. They seemed to be the Hottentots of our own continent. Still they were not altogether without the means of commanding our respect. As physical men they were both active and strong, and there were gleams of ferocity about them, that all their avarice and art could not conceal. I could not discover in their usages, dress, or deportment, a single trace of that chivalrous honor which forms so great a relief to the well-established cruelty of the warriors of our own part of the continent. Then, these sea-otter dealers had some knowledge of the use of fire-arms, and were too well acquainted with the ships of us civilized men to have any superstitious dread of our power.

The Dipper and his companions sold us one hundred and thirty-three sea-otter skins the very afternoon we anchored. This, of itself, was thought to be a sufficient reward for the trouble and risk of coming into this unknown basin. Both parties seemed pleased with the results of the trading, and we were given to understand that, by remaining at anchor, we might hope for six or eight times our present number of skins. Captain Williams was greatly gratified with the success with which he had already met, and having found that all the Dipper had promised came true, he determined to remain a day or two, in his present berth, in order to wait for more bargains. This resolution was no sooner communicated to the savages than they expressed their delight, sending off Tin-pot and Slit-nose with the intelligence, while the Dipper and Smudge remained in the ship, apparently on terms of perfect goodfellowship with everybody on board. The gentry of the northwest coast being flagrant thieves, however, all hands had orders to keep a good lookout on our two guests. Captain Williams expressed his intention to flog them soundly, should they be detected in any of their usual light-fingered dexterity.

Marble and myself observed that the canoe, in which the messengers left us, did not pull out to sea, but that it entered a small stream, or creek, that communicated with the head of the bay. As there was no duty on board, we asked the captain's permission to explore this spot; and, at the same time, to make a more thorough examination of our haven, generally. The request being granted, we got into the yawl, with four men, all of us armed, and set out on our little expedition. Smudge, a withered, gray-headed old Indian, with muscles, however, that resembled whip-cord, was alone on deck, when this movement took place. He watched our proceedings narrowly, and, when he saw us descend into the boat,

he very coolly slipped down the ship's side, and took his place in the stern-sheets, with as much quiet dignity as if he had been captain. Marble was a good deal of a ship's martinet in such matters, and he did not more than half like the familiarity and impudence of the proceedure.

"What say you, Miles?" he asked, a little sharply; "shall we take this dried orang-otang ashore with us, or shall we try to moisten him a little, by throwing him overboard?"

"Let him go, by all means, Mr. Marble. I dare say the man wishes to be of use, and he has only a bad manner of showing it."

"Of use! He is worth no more than the carcass of a whale that has been stripped of its blubber. I say, Miles, there would be no need of the windlass to heave the blanket off this fish!"

This professional witticism put Marble in good humor with himself, and he permitted the fellow to remain. I remember the thoughts that passed through my mind, as the yawl pulled through the creek on that occasion, as well as if it had all occurred yesterday. I sat looking at the semi-human being who was seated opposite, wondering at the dispensation of divine Providence which could leave one endowed with a portion of the ineffable nature of the Deity, in a situation so degraded. I had seen beasts in cages that appeared to me to be quite as intelligent, and members of the diversified family of human caricatures, or of the baboons and monkeys, that I thought were quite as agreeable objects to the eye. Smudge seemed to be almost without ideas. In his bargains, he had trusted entirely to the vigilance of the Dipper, whom we supposed to be some sort of relation; and the articles he received in exchange for his skins failed to arouse in his grim, vacant countenance the smallest signs of pleasure. Emotion and he, if they had been acquainted, now appeared to be utter strangers to each other: nor was this apathy in the least like the well-known stoicism of the American Indian, but had the air of downright insensibility. Yet this man assuredly had a soul, a spark of the never-dying flame that separates man from all the other beings of earth!

The basin in which the *Crisis* lay was entirely fringed with forest. The trees in most places even overhung the water, forming an impenetrable screen to everything inland, at the season when they were in leaf. Not a sign of a habitation of any sort was visible; and, as we approached the shore, Marble remarked that the savages could only resort to the place at the moments when they had induced a ship to enter, in order to trade with them.

"No, no!" added the mate, turning his head in all directions, in order to take a complete survey of the bay, "there are no wigwams or pappooses hereabouts. This is only a trading-post; and, luckily for us, it is altogether without custom-house officers."

"Not without smugglers, I fancy, Mr. Marble, if contriving to get other people's property without their knowledge can make a smuggler. I never saw a more thorough-looking thief than the chap we have nicknamed the Dipper. I believe he would swallow one of our iron spoons, rather than not get it!"

"Ay, there's no mistake about it, 'Master Mile,' as Neb calls you. But this fellow here hasn't brains enough to tell his own property from that of another man. I would let him into our bread-lockers, without any dread of his knowing enough to eat. I never saw such a vacancy in a human form; a down-east idiot would wind him up in a trade as handily as a pedler sets his wooden clocks in motion."

Such was Marble's opinion of the sagacity of Mr. Smudge, and, to own the truth, such, in a great measure, was my own. The men laughed at the remarks—seamen are a little apt to laugh at chief mates' wit—and their looks showed how thoroughly they coincided with us in opinion. All this time the boat had been pushing ahead, and it soon reached the mouth of the little creek.

We found the inlet deep, but narrow and winding. Like the bay itself, it was fringed with trees and bushes, and this in a way to render it difficult to get a view

of anything on the land, more especially as the banks were ten or fifteen feet in height. Under the circumstances, Marble proposed that we should land on both sides of the creek, and follow its windings on foot, for a short distance, in order to get a better opportunity to reconnoiter. Our dispositions were soon made. Marble and one of the boat's crew, each armed, landed on one side of the inlet, while Neb and myself, similarly provided, went ashore on the other. The two remaining men were ordered to keep abreast of us in the boat, in readiness to take us on board again, as soon as required.

"Leave that Mr. Smudge in the boat, Miles," Marble called out across the creek, as I was about to put foot on the ground. I made a sign to that effect to the savage, but when I reached the level ground on the top of the bank, I perceived the fellow was at my elbow. It was so difficult to make such a creature understand one's wishes without the aid of speech, that, after a fruitless effort or two to send him back by means of signs, I abandoned the attempt, and moved forward so as to keep the whole party in the desired line. Neb offered to catch the old fellow in his arms and to carry him down to the yawl; but I thought it more prudent to avoid anything like violence. We proceeded, therefore, accompanied by this escort.

There was nothing, however, to excite alarm or awaken distrust. We found ourselves in a virgin forest, with all its wildness, dampness, gloomy shadows, dead and fallen trees, and unequal surface. On my side of the creek there was not the smallest sign of a footpath, and Marble soon called out to say he was equally without any evidences of the steps of man. I should think we proceeded quite a mile in this manner, certain that the inlet would be a true guide on our return. At length a call from the boat let us know there was no longer water enough to float it, and that it could proceed no further. Marble and myself descended the banks at the same moment, and were taken in, intending to return in the yawl. Smudge glided back to his old place with his former silence.

"I told you to leave the orang-otang behind," Marble carelessly observed, as he took his own seat, after assisting in getting the boat round with its head toward the bay. "I would rather have a rattlesnake for a pet than such a cub."

"It is easier said than done, sir. Master Smudge stuck to me as close as a leech."

"The fellow seems all the better for his walk—I never saw him look half as amiable as he does at this moment."

Of course this raised a laugh, and it induced me to look round. For the first time I could detect something like a human expression in the countenance of Smudge, who seemed to experience some sensation a little akin to satisfaction.

"I rather think he had taken it into his head we were about to desert the coppers," I remarked, "and fancied he might lose his supper. Now he must see we are going back, he probably fancies he will go to bed on a full stomach."

Marble assented to the probability of this conjecture, and the conversation changed. It was matter of surprise to us that we had met no traces of anything like a residence near the creek, not the smallest sign of man having been discovered by either. It was reasonable to expect that some traces of an encampment at least would have been found. Everybody kept a vigilant lookout at the shore as we descended the creek; but, as on the ascent, not even a footprint was detected.

On reaching the bay, there being still several hours of daylight, we made its entire circuit, finding nowhere any proof of the former presence of man. At length Marble proposed pulling to the small wooded island, that lay a little without the entrance of the haven, suggesting that it was possible the savages might have something like an encampment there, the place being more convenient as a lookout into the offing than any point within the bay itself. In order to do this it was necessary to pass the ship, and we were hailed by the captain, who wished to know the result of our examinations. As soon as he learned our present object, he told us to come alongside, intending to accom-

pany us to the island in person. On getting into the boat, which was small and a little crowded by the presence of Smudge, Captain Williams made a sign for that personage to quit the yawl. He might as well have intimated as much to one of the thwarts! Laughing at the savage's stupidity, or obstinacy, we scarce knew which to term it, the boat was shoved off, and we pulled through the entrance, two hundred yards outside perhaps, until our keel grated against the low rocks of this islet.

There was no difficulty in landing; and Neb, who preceded the party, soon gave a shout, the proof that he had made some discovery. Every man among us now looked to his arms, expecting to meet an encampment of savages; but we were disappointed. All that the negro had discovered were the unequivocal traces of a former bivouac; and, judging from a few of the signs, that of no very recent occupation. The traces were extensive, covering quite half of the interior of the island; leaving an extensive curtain of trees and bushes, however, so as completely to conceal the spot from any eyes without. Most of the trees had been burned down, as we at first thought, in order to obtain fuel; but further examination satisfied us that it had been done as much by accident as by design.

At first nothing was discovered in this encampment, which had every appearance of not having been extensively used for years, though the traces of numerous fires, and the signs of footsteps, and a spring in the center, indicated the recent occupation, of which I have just spoken. A little further scrutiny, however, brought to light certain objects that we did not note without much wonder and concern. Marble made the first discovery. It was impossible for seamen to mistake the object, which was the head of a rudder, containing the tiller-hole, and which might have belonged to a vessel of some two hundred and fifty or three hundred tons. This set all hands of us at work, and in a few minutes we found, scattered about, the fragments of plank, top-timbers, floor-timbers, and other portions of a ship, more or less burned, and stripped of every particle of metal. Even the nails had been drawn by means of perseverance and labor. Nothing was left but the wood, which proved to be live oak, cedar, and locust, the proofs that the unfortunate craft had been a vessel of some value. We wanted no assurance of this, however, as none but a northwest trader could well have got as high up the coast, and all vessels of that class were of the best description. Then the locust, a wood unknown to the ship-builders of Europe, gave us the nearly certain assurance that this doomed craft had been a countryman.

At first, we were all too much occupied with our interesting discovery to bethink us of Smudge. At length, I turned to observe its effect on the savage. He evidently noted our proceedings; but his feelings, if the creature had any, were so deeply buried beneath the mask of dullness as completely to foil my penetration. He saw us take up fragment after fragment, examine them, heard us converse over them, though in a language he could not understand, and saw us throw them away, one after another, with seemingly equal indifference. At length, he brought a half-burned billet to the captain, and held it before his eyes, as if he began to feel some interest in our proceedings. It proved to be merely a bit of ordinary wood, a fragment of one of the beeches of the forest that lay near an extinguished pile; and the act satisfied us all the fellow did not comprehend the reason of the interest we betrayed. He clearly knew nothing of the strange vessel.

In walking around this deserted encampment, the traces of a pathway to the shore were found. They were too obvious to be mistaken, and led us to the water in the passage opposite to that by which the *Crisis* had been carried in by the Dipper, and at a point that was not in view from her present anchorage. Here we found a sort of landing, and many of the heavier pieces of the wreck; such as it had not been thought necessary to haul up to the fires, having no metal about them. Among other things of this sort, was a portion of the keel, quite

thirty feet long, the keelson bolts, keelson, and floor-timbers all attached. This was the only instance in which we discovered any metal; and this we found, only because the fragment was too strong and heavy to be manageable. We looked carefully, in all directions, in the hope of discovering something that might give us an insight into the nature of the disaster that had evidently occurred, but, for some time, without success. At length I strolled to a little distance from the landing, and took a seat on a flat stone, which had been placed on the living rock that faced most of the island, evidently to form a resting-place. My seat proved unsteady, and in endeavoring to adjust it more to my mind, I removed the stone, and discovered that it rested on a common log-slate. This slate was still covered with legible writing, and I soon had the whole party around me, eager to learn the contents. The melancholy record was in these precise words, viz.:—

"The American brig *Sea Otter*, John Squires, master, *coaxed* into this bay, June 9th, 1797, and seized by savages on the morning of the 11th. Master, second mate, and seven of the people killed on the spot. Brig gutted first, then hauled up *here*, and burned to the water's edge for the iron. David King, first mate, and six others, viz., George Lunt, Henry Webster, Stephen Stimson, and John Harris, seamen, Bill Flint, cook, and Peter Doolittle, boy, still living, but God only knows what is to be our fate. I shall put this slate beneath the stone I now sit on, in the hope it may one day let our friends learn what has happened."

We looked at each other, astounded. Both the captain and Marble remembered to have heard that a brig in this trade, called the *Sea Otter*, was missing; and here, by a communication that was little short of miraculous, we were let into the secret of her disappearance.

"*Coaxed* in," repeated the captain, running his eye over the writing, which had been thus singularly preserved, and that in a situation where one would think it might have been discovered a thousand times. "Yes, yes—I now begin to understand the whole matter. If there were any wind, gentlemen, I would go to sea this very night."

"That would be hardly worth our while, Captain Williams," the chief mate answered, "since we are now on our guard, and I feel pretty certain that there are no savages in our neighborhood. So far, the Dipper and his friends have traded with us fairly enough, and it is likely they have more skins to dispose of. This chap, whom the people have christened Smudge, takes matters so coolly, that I hardly think he knows anything about the *Sea Otter*, which may have been cut off by another gang altogether."

There was good reason in these remarks, and they had their effect on the captain. The latter, however, determined to put Smudge to the proof, by showing him the slate, and otherwise bringing him under such a cross-examination as signs alone could effect. I dare say, an indifferent spectator would have laughed at witnessing our efforts to confound the Indian. We made grimaces, pointed, exclaimed, hallooed, swore, and gesticulated in vain. Smudge was as unmoved at it all as the fragment of keel to which he was confronted. The fellow either did not, or would not understand us. His stupidity defied our tests; and Marble gave the matter up in despair, declaring that "the beast knows nothing of anything, much less of the *Sea Otter*." As for the slate, he did not seem to have the smallest notion what such a thing meant.

We returned to the ship, carrying with us the slate, and the report of our discoveries. All hands were called, and the captain made us a speech. It was sufficiently to the point, though it was not in the least of the "God-like" character. We were told how ships were lost by the carelessness of their crews; reminded we were on the northwest coast, where a vessel with a few boxes of beads and bales of blankets, to say nothing of her gunpowder, firearms, and metals, was as valuable as a vessel laden with gold dust

would be in one of our own ports. Vigilance, while on watch, and obedience to the orders of the vessel, in the event of an alarm, were the principal things dwelt on. By observing these two great requisites, we should all be safe enough; whereas by disregarding them we should probably share the fate of the people of the brig, of which we had just discovered some of the remains.

I will confess I passed an uncomfortable night. An unknown enemy is always a formidable enemy; and I would rather have fought three *guarda-costas* at once, than lie where we did, in a bay as smooth as a looking-glass, surrounded by forests as silent as a desert, and in a well-armed ship, that was prepared at all points to meet her foes, even to her boarding-nettings.

Nothing came of it all. The Dipper and Smudge eat their supper with the appetites of injured innocence, and slept like tops. If guilty, we all agreed that they must be utterly destitute of consciences. As for ourselves, we were on the alert until near morning, the very moment when the danger would probably be the greatest, provided there were any at all; and then weariness overcame all who were not on the lookout and some who were. Still, nothing happened. The sun returned to us in due season, gilding the tree-tops with its beams; our little bay began to bask in its glory, and with the cheerfulness that usually accompanies such a scene, vanished most of our apprehensions for the moment. A night of reflection had quieted our fears, and we all woke up next morning, as indifferent to the fate of the *Sea Otter* as was at all decent.

CHAPTER XIII.

"The monarch mind—the mystery of commanding,
The godlike power—the art Napoleon,
Of winning, fettering, molding, wielding, banding
The hearts of millions, till they move as one;
Thou hast it."—HALLECK—RED JACKET.

SMUDGE and the Dipper behaved admirably all next day. Beef, pork, and bread —those great desiderata of life, which the European is apt to say form the *primum mobile* of American existence—seemed to engross their thoughts; and when they were not eating, they were busy with sleep. At length we grew ashamed of watching such mere animals, and turned our thoughts to other subjects. We had understood the Dipper that eight-and-forty hours must elapse before we might expect to see any more skins; and Captain Williams, passing from alarm to extreme security, determined to profit by a lovely day, and send down or rather strip all three of the topmasts, and pay some necessary attention to their rigging. At nine o'clock, accordingly, the hands were turned-to, and before noon the ship was pretty thoroughly *en deshabille*. We sent as little down as possible, keeping even the topsail-yards aloft, though without their lifts or braces, steadying them by guys; but the topmasts were lowered as far as was found possible, without absolutely placing the lower yards on the hammock-cloths. In a word, we put the ship in a most unmanageable position, without absolutely littering our decks. The security of the haven, and the extreme beauty of the weather, emboldened the captain to do this; apprehension of every sort appearing to have quite taken leave of him.

The work proceeded merrily. We had not only a strong crew, but we had a good crew; and our Philadelphians were in their element the moment there was a question of the rigging. By sunset the chafes were examined, and parceled, and served anew; and the topmast rigging was all got up and put over the mast-heads again, and everything was ready to sway upon in the morning. But an uncommonly active day required a good night's rest; and the people were all ordered to turn in, as soon as they had supped. The ship was to be left to the vigilance of the captain and the three mates during the night.

The anchor watch was set at eight, and ran from two hours to two hours. My turn commenced at midnight, and was to last until two; Marble succeeding me from two until four, when all hands were

to be called to get our sticks aloft. When I turned out at twelve, I found the third mate conversing, as well as he could, with the Dipper; who, with Smudge, having slept so much of the day, appeared disposed to pass the night in smoking.

"How long have these fellows been on deck?" I asked of the third mate as he was about to go below.

"All my watch; I found them with the captain, who passed them over to me for company. If that chap, the Dipper, only knew anything of a human language, he would be something of society; but I am as tired of making signs to him as I ever was with a hard day's work."

I was armed, and felt ashamed of manifesting fear of an unarmed man. Then the two savages gave no additional cause of distrust; the Dipper having taken a seat on the windlass, where he was smoking his pipe with an appearance of philosophy that would have done credit to the gravest-looking baboon. As for Smudge, he did not appear to be sufficiently intellectual to smoke—an occupation that has at least the merit of affecting the air of wisdom and reflection. I never could discover whether your great smokers were actually wiser than the rest of the race, or not; but, it will be admitted, they occasionally seem to be so. It was a pity Smudge did not have recourse to the practice, as it might have given the fellow an appearance of sometimes cogitating. As it was, while his companion was enjoying his pipe at the windlass, he kept strolling about the deck, much as a pig would have wandered in the same place, and seemingly with the same object.

I took charge of the decks with a very lively sense of the peculiarity of our situation. The security that prevailed on board struck me as unnatural; and yet I could detect no particular reason for immediate alarm. I might be thrown overboard or murdered by the two savages on deck, it was very true; but of what use would it be to destroy me, since they could not hope to destroy all the rest on board without being discovered. The night was star-lit, and there was little chance of a canoe's approaching the ship without my seeing it; a circumstance that, of itself, in a great measure, removed the danger. I passed the first quarter of an hour in reflecting on these things; and then, as use accustomed me to my situation, I began to think less of them and to revert to other subjects.

Clawbonny, Grace, Lucy, and Mr. Hardinge, often rose before my mind's eye, in those distant seas. It was seldom I passed a tranquil watch at night without revisiting the scenes of my boyhood, and wandering through my own fields accompanied by my beloved sister and her quite as well beloved friend. How many hours of happiness had I thus passed on the trackless wastes of the Pacific and the Atlantic, and with how much fidelity did memory recall the peculiar graces, whether of body or mind, of each of the dear girls in particular. Since my recent experience in London, Emily Merton would occasionally adorn the picture, with her more cultivated discourse and more finished manner; and yet I do not remember to have ever given her more than a third place on the scale of my admiration.

On the present occasion I was soon lost in ruminations on the past, and in imagining events for the future. I was not particularly expert at building castles in the air; but what youth of twenty, or maiden of sixteen, never reared some sort of a fabric of this nature? These fanciful structures are the results of inexperience building with the materials of hope. In my most imaginative moments, I could even fancy Rupert an industrious, staid lawyer, adorning his profession, and rendering both Lucy and Grace happy. Beyond this it was not easy for the human faculties to conceive.

Lucy sung sweetly. At times her songs fairly haunted me, and for hours I could think of nothing but their tender sentiment and their touching melody. I was no nightingale myself, though I sometimes endeavored to hum some one of the airs that floated in my recollection, like beautiful visions of the past. This night, in particular, my thoughts recurred to one of those songs that told of affection and home; and I stood for

The whole had been done so suddenly, and yet with so much skill, that I was a helpless prisoner, as it might be, in a single instant.

—*Afloat and Ashore.*

several minutes leaning over the railing forward, humming the tune to myself, while I endeavored to recall not only the words but the sweet voice that was wont to give them so much thrilling pathos. I did this sometimes at Clawbonny; and time and again had Lucy placed her soft little hand on my mouth, as she would laughingly say, "Miles, Miles, do not spoil so pretty a song! You will never succeed with music, so work the harder with your Latin." Sometimes she would steal behind me—I fancied I could hear her breathing at my shoulder, even as I leaned over the rail—and would apply her hand slyly to my lips, in her many attempts of this nature. So vivid did one of these scenes become, that I thought I really felt the smooth hand on my mouth, and I was actually about to kiss it, when something that was smooth enough, certainly, but which was very far from being soft, passed between my teeth, and I felt it drawn so tight as to completely prevent my calling out. At the same moment my arms were seized from behind, and held as if grasped by a vise. Turning, as well as I was able, I found that rascal Smudge had been breathing within an inch of my ear, while he passed the gag; and the Dipper was busy in lashing my arms together behind my back. The whole had been done so suddenly, and yet with so much skill, that I was a helpless prisoner, as it might be, in a single instant.

Resistance being as much out of my power as it was to give any alarm, I was soon secured, hands and feet, and placed carefully in the waist, a little out of the way; for I probably owed my life solely to the wish of Smudge to keep me as his slave. From that instant every appearance of stupidity vanished from this fellow's countenance and manner, and he became the moving spirit and I might say the soul, of all the proceedings of his companions. As for myself, there I sat, lashed to a spar, utterly unable to help myself, an unwilling witness of all that followed. I felt the imminent danger of our situation, but I think I felt the disgrace of having such a surprise occur in my watch, more even than the personal risks I ran.

In the first place, I was disarmed. Then the Dipper took a lantern which stood on the binnacle, lighted it, and showed it, for half a minute, above the taffrail. His signal must have been instantly answered, for he soon extinguished the light, and moved about the deck, in attentive watchfulness to seize any straggler who might happen to come on deck. Little fear of that, however, weariness chaining the men to their berths as closely as if they had been bolted down with iron. I now expected to see the fellows fill the yawl with effects, and run away with them, for, as yet, I could not believe that two men would have the hardihood to attack such a ship's company as ours.

I reckoned without my host. It might have been ten minutes after I was seized that dark-looking figures began to climb the ship's sides until more than thirty of them were on her decks. This was done so noiselessly, too, that the most vigilant attention on my part gave no notice of their approach, until they stood among us. All these men were armed; a few with muskets, others with clubs, and some with bows and arrows. So far as I could discover, each had some sort of a knife, and a few had hatchets, or tomahawks. To my great regret, I saw that three or four were immediately stationed at the companion-way, aft, and as many more at the booby-hatch, forward. This was effectually commanding the only two passages by which the officers and men would be likely to ascend, in the event of their attempting to come on deck. It is true, the mainhatch, as well as that of the steerage, was used by day, but both had been covered over night, and no one would think of using either unless aware of the danger that existed on deck.

I suffered a good deal both from the gag and the ropes that bound my limbs, and yet I hardly thought of the pain, so intense was my curiosity as to what was to follow. After the savages were all on board, the first quarter of an hour passed in making their dispositions. Smudge—the stupid, inanimate, senseless Smudge—

acting as leader, and manifesting not only authority, but readiness and sagacity. He placed all his people in ambush, so that one appearing from below would not at once be apprised of the change that had taken place on deck, and thus give the savages time to act. After this, another quarter of an hour passed, during which the fall of a pin might almost have been heard, so profound was the silence. I shut my eyes in this terrific interval, and endeavored to pray.

"On deck, here—forward there!" said a voice, suddenly, that at once I knew to be the captain's. I would have given the world to be able to answer, in order to warn him of the danger, but this was impossible. I did groan, and I believe the captain heard me; for he moved away from the cabin door, and called out, "Mr. Wallingford—where have you got to, Mr. Wallingford?" He was without his hat, having come on deck half-clad, simply to ascertain how went the night, and it makes me shudder, even now, to write about the blow that fell on his unprotected skull. It would have felled an ox, and it crushed him on the spot. The caution of his murderers prevented his falling, however, for they did not wish to alarm the sleepers below; though the plash on the water that followed could not fail to reach ears which took in every sound with the avidity of mine. Thus perished Captain Williams, a mild, well-meaning man, an excellent seaman, and one whose principal fault was want of caution. I do not think the water was necessary to complete his fate, as nothing human could have survived such a blow.

Smudge had been the principal actor in this frightful scene; and as soon as it was over, he caused his men to return to their ambushes. I now thought the officers and men were to be murdered in this manner, as one by one they appeared on deck. It would soon be time for Marble to turn out, though there was the hope he might not unless called, and I could not do this office, situated as I was. But I was mistaken. Instead of enticing any men on deck, the savages pursued a different course. Having destroyed the captain, they closed the doors of the companion-way, drew over the booby-hatch, and adopted the safe expedient of making all below prisoners. This was not done altogether without noise, and the alarm was evidently given by the means taken to secure the fastenings. I heard a rush at the cabin doors, which was soon followed by one at the booby-hatch; but Smudge's ingenuity had been sufficient to prevent either from being successful.

As soon as certain that their prisoners were safe, the savages came and loosened the ropes of my arm sufficiently to put me more at my ease. They removed those which bound my feet, entirely, and, at the same instant, the gag was taken from my mouth. I was then led to the companion-way, and, by a sign, given to understand I might communicate with my friends below. In the management of all this, I found that Smudge, the semi-human, dull, animal-seeming Smudge, was at the head. I also came to the conclusion that my life was to be spared, for a time at least, and for some purpose that, as yet, baffled my conjectures. I did not call out immediately, but waited until I heard a movement on the ladder, when I complied with the orders of my captors and masters.

"Mr. Marble," I cried, loud enough to be heard below, "is that you?"

"Ay, ay! and is that you, Master Miles?"

"This is I. Be cautious how you act, Mr. Marble. The savages are in possession of the upper deck, and I am their prisoner. The people are all below, with a strong watch at the fore-scuttle."

I heard a long, low whistle within the companion-way doors, which it was easy enough to interpret into an expression of the chief mate's concern and wonder. For myself I saw no use in attempting concealment, but was resolved to speak out fully, even though it might be at the risk of betraying some of my feelings to my captors, among whom I thought it probable there might be more than one who understood something of English.

"We miss Captain Williams below, here," Marble resumed, after a short delay. "Do you know anything of his movements?"

"Alas! Mr. Marble — poor Captain Williams can be of no service to any of us now."

"What of him?" was demanded in a clear, full voice, and as quick as lightning. "Let me know at once."

"He has been killed by the blow of a club, and is thrown overboard."

A dead silence followed, and it lasted near a minute.

"Then it has fallen to my duty to decide what is to be done!" Marble at length exclaimed. "Miles, are you at liberty? Dare you say what you think?"

"I am held here by two of the savages, whose prisoner I certainly am. Still, Mr. Marble, they encourage me to speak; but I fear some among them understand what we say."

There was another pause, during which the mate was doubtless reflecting on the best course to pursue.

"Harkee, Miles," Marble continued, "we know each other and can tell what is meant without blabbing. How old are you, out there on deck?"

"Quite thirty years, Mr. Marble—and good stout years they are too!"

"Well provided for, with sulphur and the pills, or only with Indian tools, such as our boys sometimes play with?"

"A little of the first—half a dozen, perhaps; with some of the last, and a plenty of carvers."

An impatient push from the Dipper warned me to speak plainer, and satisfied me that the fellow could comprehend what passed, so long as we confined ourselves to a straightforward discourse. This discovery had the effect to put me still more on my guard.

"I understand you, Miles," Marble answered, in a thoughtful manner; "we must be on our guard. Do you think they mean to come below?"

"I see no signs at present; but *understanding*"—emphasizing the word—"is more general than you imagine, and no secrets must be told. My advice is, 'Millions for defense, and not a cent for tribute.'"

As this last expression was common in the mouths of the Americans of the day, having been used on the occasion of the existing war with France, I felt confident it would be understood. Marble made no answer, and I was permitted to move from the companion-way, and to take a seat on the hen-coops. My situation was sufficiently remarkable. It was still dark; but enough light fell from the stars to permit me to see all the swarthy and savage forms that were gliding about the decks, and even to observe something of the expression of the countenances of those who, from time to time, came near to stare me in the face. The last seemed ferociously disposed; but it was evident that a master-spirit held all these wild beings in strict subjection; quelling the turbulence of their humors, restraining their fierce disposition to violence, and giving concert and design to all their proceedings. This master-spirit was Smudge! Of the fact, I could not doubt; his gestures, his voice, his commands, giving movement and method to everything that was done. I observed that he spoke with authority and confidence, though he spoke calmly. He was obeyed without any particular marks of deference, but he was obeyed implicitly. I could also see that the savages considered themselves as conquerors; caring very little for the men under hatches.

Nothing material occurred until day dawned. Smudge—for so I must continue to call this revolting-looking chief, for want of his true name—would permit nothing to be attempted until the light became sufficiently strong to enable him to note the proceedings of his followers. I subsequently ascertained, too, that he waited for reinforcements, a yell being raised in the ship, just as the sun appeared, which was answered from the forest. The last seemed fairly alive with savages; nor was it long before canoes issued from the creek, and I counted one hundred and seven of these wretches on board the ship. This was their whole force, however, no more ever appearing.

All this time, or for three hours, I had no more communication with our own people. I was certain, however, that they were all together, a junction being easy enough, by means of the middle-deck,

which had no other cargo than the light articles intended for the northwest trade, and by knocking down the forecastle bulkhead. There was a sliding board in the last, indeed, that would admit of one man's passing at a time, without having recourse to this last expedient. I entertained no doubt that Marble had collected all hands below; and, being in possession of plenty of arms, the men having carried their muskets and pistols below with them, with all the ammunition, he was still extremely formidable.

What course he would pursue, I was obliged to conjecture. A sortie would have been very hazardous, if practicable at all: and it was scarcely practicable, after the means taken by Smudge and the Dipper to secure the passages. Everything, so far as I was concerned, was left to conjecture.

The manner in which my captors treated me excited my surprise. As soon as it was light, my limbs were released, and I was permitted to walk up and down the quarter-deck to restore the circulation of the blood. A clot of blood, with some fragments of hair, marked the spot where poor Captain Williams had fallen; and I was allowed to dash a bucket of water over the place, in order to wash away the revolting signs of the murder. For myself, a strange recklessness had taken the place of concern, and I became momentarily indifferent to my fate. I expected to die, and I am now ashamed to confess that my feelings took a direction toward revenge, rather than toward penitence for my past sins. At times, I even envied Marble and those below, who might destroy their enemies at a swoop, by throwing a match into the magazine. I felt persuaded, indeed, it would come to that before the mate and men would submit to be the captives of such wretches as were then in possession of the deck. Smudge and his associates, however, appeared to be perfectly indifferent to this danger, of the character of which they were probably ignorant. Their scheme had been very cunningly laid; and, thus far, it was perfectly successful.

The sun was fairly up, and the savages began to think seriously of securing their prize, when the two leaders, Smudge and the Dipper, approached me in a manner to show that they were on the point of commencing operations. The last of these men I now discovered had a trifling knowledge of English, which he had obtained from different ships. Still he was a savage, to all intents and purposes, the little information thus gleaned serving to render his worst propensities more dangerous rather than, in any manner, tempering them. He now took the lead, parading all his men in two lines on the deck, making a significant gesture toward his fingers, and uttering, with emphasis, the word "count." I did count the wretches, making, this time, one hundred and six, exclusive of the two leaders.

"Tell him, down there," growled the Dipper, pointing below.

I called for Mr. Marble, and when he had reached the companion-way the following conversation took place between us:

"What is it now, Miles, my hearty?" demanded the chief mate.

"I am ordered to tell you, sir, that the Indians number one hundred and eight, having just counted them for this purpose."

"I wish there were a thousand, as we are about to lift the deck from the ship, and send them all into the air. Do you think they can understand what I say, Miles?"

"The Dipper does, sir, when you speak slow and plain. He has only half a notion of what you now mean, as I can see by his countenance."

"Does the rascal hear me now?—is he anywhere near the companion-way?"

"He does, and is—he is standing at this moment on the larboard side of the companion-way, kneeling one knee on the forward end of the hen-coop."

"Miles," said Marble, in a doubting sort of a voice.

"Mr. Marble—I hear what you say."

"Suppose—eh—lead through the companion-way—eh—what would happen to *you*?"

"I should care little for that, sir, as I've

made up my mind to be murdered. But it would do no good just now, and might do harm. I will tell them, however, of your intention to blow them up, if you please; perhaps *that* may make them a little shy."

Marble assented, and I set about the office as well as I could. Most of my communications had to be made by means of signs; but, in the end, I succeeded in making the Dipper understand my meaning. By this man the purport was told to Smudge, in terms. The old man listened with grave attention, but the idea of being blown up produced no more effect on him than would have been produced by a message from home to tell him that his chimney was on fire, supposing him to have possessed such a civilized instrument of comfort.

That he fully comprehended his friend, I could see by the expression of his orang-otang-looking countenance. But fear was a passion that troubled him very little; and, sooth to say, a man whose time was passed in a condition as miserable as that in which he habitually dwelt, had no great reason to set a very high value on his life. Yet these miserable wretches never commit suicide! That is a relief reserved rather for those who have become satiated with human enjoyments, nine pampered sensualists dying in this mode for one poor wretch whose miseries have driven him to despair.

I was astonished at seeing the intelligence that gleamed in the baboon-like face of Smudge, as he listened to his friend's words. Incredulity was the intellectual meaning in his eye, while indifference seemed seated in his whole visage.

It was evident the threat had made no impression, and I managed to let Marble understand as much, and that in terms which the Dipper could not very well comprehend. I got no answer, a death-like stillness reigning below decks, in lieu of the bustle that had so lately been heard there. Smudge seemed struck with the change, and I observed he was giving orders to two or three of the elder savages, apparently to direct a greater degree of watchfulness. I confess to some uneasiness myself, for expectation is an unpleasant guest in a scene like that, and more especially when accompanied by uncertainty.

Smudge now seemed to think it time to commence his operations in earnest. Under the direction of the Dipper a quantity of line was thrown into the yawl, studding-halyards, and such other rope of convenient size as could be found in the launch, and the boat was towed by two or three canoes to the island. Here the fellows made what seamen call a "guess-warp" of their rope, fastening one end to a tree, and paying out line as the yawl was towed back again to the ship. The Dipper's calculation proved to be sufficiently accurate, the rope reaching from the vessel to the tree.

As soon as this feat was accomplished, and it was done with sufficient readiness, though somewhat lubberly, twenty or thirty of the savages clapped on the warp until they had tautened it to as great a strain as it would bear. After this they ceased pulling, and I observed a search around the galley in quest of the cook's ax, evidently with a design to cut the cables. I thought this a fact worth communicating to Marble, and I resolved to do so at the risk of my life.

"The Indians have run a line to the island, and are about to cut the cables, no doubt intending to warp the ship ashore, and that, too, at the very spot where they once had the *Sea Otter*."

"Ay, ay—let them go on; we'll be ready for them in time," was the only answer I received.

I never knew whether to ascribe the apathy the savages manifested to this communication, to a wish that the fact might be known to the people below, or to indifference. They certainly proceeded in their movements with just as much coolness as if they had the ship all to themselves. They had six or eight canoes, and parties of them began to move round the vessel with precisely the same confidence as men would do it in a friendly port. What most surprised me were the quiet and submission to orders they observed. At length the ax was

found secreted in the bows of the launch, and Marble was apprised of the use to which it was immediately applied by the heavy blows that fell upon the cables.

"Miles," said the chief mate, "these blows go to my heart! Are the blackguards really in earnest?"

"The larboard bower is gone, sir, and the blows you now hear are on the starboard, which is already half in two—that finishes it; the ship now hangs only by the warp."

"Is there any wind, boy?"

"Not a breath of it in the bay, though I can see a little ripple on the water outside."

"Is it rising or falling water, Miles?"

"The ebb is nearly done—they'll never be able to get the ship up on the shelving rock where they had the *Sea Otter*, until the water rises ten or twelve feet."

"Thank God for that! I was afraid they might get her on that accursed bed, and break her back at once."

"Is it of any importance to us, Mr. Marble? What hope can we have of doing anything against such odds, and in our circumstances?"

"The odds I care nothing for, boy. My lads are screwed up so tight, they'd lick the whole northwest if they could only get on deck without having their fashion-pieces stove in. The circumstances, I allow, must count for a great deal."

"The ship is moving fast toward the island—I see no hope for us, Mr. Marble."

"I say, Miles, it is worth some risk to try and save the craft—were it not for fear of you, I would have played the racals a trick half an hour since."

"Never mind me, sir—it was my fault it has happened, and I ought to suffer for it—do what duty and discretion tell you is best."

I waited a minute after this in intense expectation, not knowing what was to follow, when a report made me fancy for an instant some attempt was making to blow up the deck. The wails and cries that succeeded, however, soon let me into the real state of the case. A volley of muskets had been fired from the cabin windows, and every individual in two canoes that were passing at the time, to the number of eleven, were shot down like bullocks. Three were killed dead, and the remainder received wounds that promised to be mortal. My life would have been the instant sacrifice of this act, had it not been for the stern authority of Smudge, who ordered my assailants off, with a manner and tone that produced immediate compliance. It was clear I was reserved for some peculiar fate.

Every man who could, rushed into the remaining canoes and the ship's yawl, in order to pick up the killed and wounded, as soon as the nature of the calamity was known. I watched them from the taffrail, and soon ascertained that Marble was doing the same from the windows below me. But the savages did not dare venture in a line with a fire that had proved so fatal, and were compelled to wait until the ship had moved sufficiently ahead to enable them to succor their friends without exposing their own lives. As this required some distance as well as time, the ship was not only left without a canoe or boat of any sort, in the water, but with only half her assailants on board of her. Those who did remain, for want of means to attack any other enemy, vented their spite on the ship, expending all their strength in frantic efforts on the warp. The result was, that while they gave great way to the vessel, they finally broke the line.

I was leaning on the wheel with Smudge near me, when this accident occurred. The tide was still running ebb and with some strength, and the ship was just entering the narrow passage between the island and the point that formed one termination of the bay, heading, of course, toward the tree to which the warp had been secured. It was an impulsive feeling, rather than any reason, that made me give the vessel a sheer with the helm, so as to send her directly through the passage, instead of letting her strike the rocks. I had no eventful hope in so doing, nor any other motive than the strong reluctance I felt to have the good craft hit the bottom. Luckily, the Dipper was in the canoes, and it was not an easy matter to follow the ship, under the fire from

her cabin windows, had he understood the case and been disposed to do so. But, like all the rest in the canoes, he was busy with his wounded friends, who were all carried off toward the creek. This left me master of the ship's movements for five minutes, and by that time she had drawn through the passage, and was actually shooting out into the open ocean.

This was a novel, and in some respects an embarrassing situation. It left a gleam of hope, but it was a hope without a direction and almost without an object. I could perceive that none of the savages on board had any knowledge of the cause of our movement unless they might understand the action of the tide. They had expected the ship to be run ashore at the tree; and here she was gliding into the ocean, and was already clear of the passage. The effect was to produce a panic, and fully one half of those who had remained in the ship jumped overboard and began to swim for the island. I was momentarily in hope all would take this course; but quite five-and-twenty remained, more from necessity than choice, as I afterward discovered, for they did not know how to swim. Of this number was Smudge, who probably still remained to secure his conquest.

It struck me the moment was favorable, and I went to the companion-way and was about to remove its fastenings, thinking the ship might be recovered during the prevalence of the panic. But a severe blow, and a knife gleaming in the hands of Smudge, admonished me of the necessity of greater caution. The affair was not yet ended, nor was my captor a man as easily disconcerted as I had incautiously supposed. Unpromising as he seemed, this fellow had a spirit that fitted him for great achievements, and which, under other circumstances, might have made him a hero. He taught me the useful lesson of not judging of men merely by their exteriors.

CHAPTER XIV.

"*Court.*—Brother John Bates, is not that the morning which breaks yonder?

"*Bates.*—I think it be; but we have no great cause to desire the approach of day.

"*Will.*—We see yonder the beginning of the day; but I think we shall never see the end of it."

—HENRY V.

THE ship did not lose her steerage way. As soon as past the point of the island a gentle southerly breeze was felt, and acting on the spars and hull it enabled me, by putting the helm a little up, to keep her head off shore, and thus increase her distance from the bay. The set of the tide did more for her than the wind, it is true, but the two acting in unison carried her away from the coast at a rate that nearly equaled two knots in the hour. This was slow moving, certainly, for a vessel in such a strait; but it would require fifteen or twenty minutes for the canoes to return from the creek, and make the circuit of the island by the other channel. By that time we should be near half a mile at sea.

Smudge, beyond a question, understood that he was in a dilemma, though totally ignorant of some of the leading difficulties of his case. It was plain to me he could not comprehend why the ship took the direction of the offing, for he had no conception of the power of the rudder. Our tiller worked below, and it is possible this circumstance mystified him; more small vessels in that day managing their helms without the aid of the wheel than with it. At length the movement of the vessel became too palpable to admit of further delay; and this savage approached me with a drawn knife, and a manner that proved natural affection had not been the motive of his previous moderation. After flourishing his weapon fiercely before my eyes, and pressing it most significantly, once or twice, against my breast, he made signs for me to cause the ship to turn round and re-enter the port. I thought my last moment had come, but naturally enough pointed to the spars, giving my master to understand that the vessel was not in her usual trim. I believe I was understood as to this part of

my excuses, it being too apparent that our masts and yards were not in their usual places for the fact to be overlooked even by a savage. Smudge, however, saw that several of the sails were bent, and he pointed to those, growling out his threats should I refuse to set them. The spanker, in particular, being near him, he took hold of it, shook it, and ordered me to loosen it forthwith.

It is scarcely necessary to say, I obeyed this order with secret joy. Casting loose the brails, I put the out-hauler in the hands of a dozen of the savages, and set the example of pulling. In a minute we had this sail spread, with the sheet a little eased off. I then led a party forward, and got the fore and main staysails on the ship. To these were added the mizzen staysail, the only other piece of canvas we could show, until the topmasts were fidded. The effect of these four sails, however, was to add at least another knot to the way of the ship, and to carry her out sooner to a point where she felt the full force of the light breeze that was blowing from the southeast. By the time the four sails were set, we were fully a quarter of a mile from the island, every instant getting more fairly into the true currents of the air.

Smudge watched me with the eyes of a hawk. As I had obeyed his own orders in making sail, he could not complain of that; but the result evidently disappointed him. He saw we were still moving in the wrong direction, and as yet not a canoe was visible. As for these last, now the vessel had way on her, I was not without hopes of being able to keep them exposed to the fire from the cabin windows, and, finally, of getting rid of them by drawing off the land to a distance they would not be likely to follow. The Dipper, however, I was aware, was a bold fellow—knew something of vessels—and I was determined to give a hint to Marble to pick *him* off, should he come within range of his muskets.

In the meantime the alarm and impatience of Smudge and his companions very sensibly increased. Five minutes were an age, in the circumstances in which they were placed, and I saw that it would soon be necessary to adopt some new expedient, or I might expect to be sacrificed to the resentment of these savages. Necessity sharpens the wits, and I hit upon a scheme which was not entirely without the merit of ingenuity. As it was, I suppose I owed my life to the consciousness of the savages that they could do nothing without me.

Smudge, with three or four of the fiercest of his companions, had begun again to menace me with the knife, making signs, at the same time, for me to turn the ship's head toward the land. I asked for a little room, and then describing a long circle on the deck, pointing to the four sails we had set, and this in a way to tell them that under the canvas we carried it would be necessary to go a great distance in order to turn round. When I had succeeded in communicating this idea I forthwith set about giving them to understand that by getting up the topmasts, and making more sail, we might return immediately. The savages understood me, and the explanation appearing reasonable to them, they went aside, and consulted together. As time pressed, it was not long before Smudge came to me with signs to show him and his party how to get the remainder of the sails set. Of course, I was not backward in giving the desired information.

In a few minutes, I had a string of the savages hold of the mast-rope, forward, a luff-tackle being applied. As everything was ready aloft all we had to do was to pull, until, judging by the eye, I thought the spar was high enough, when I ran up the rigging and clapped in the fid. Having the topmast out of the way, without touching any of its rigging, I went down on the fore-yard, and loosened the sail. This appeared so much like business that the savages gave sundry exclamations of delight; and by the time I got on deck, they were all ready to applaud me as a good fellow. Even Smudge was completely mystified; and when I set the others at work at the jeer-fall to sway up the fore-yard, he was as active as any of them. We soon had the yard in its place.

and I went aloft to secure it, touching the braces first so as to fill the sail.

The reader may rest assured I did not hurry myself, now I had things in so fair a way. I could perceive that my power and importance increased with every foot we went from the land; and the ship steering herself under such canvas, the wheel being a trifle up, there was no occasion for extraordinary exertion on my part. I determined now to stay aloft as long as possible. The yard was soon secured, and then I went up into the top, where I began to set up the weather-rigging. Of course, nothing was very thoroughly done, though sufficiently so for the weather we had.

From the top I had a good view of the offing, and of the coast for leagues. We were now quite a mile at sea, and, though the tide was no longer of any use to us, we were drawing through the water quite at the rate of two knots. I thought that the flood had made, and that it took us a little on our lee-bow, hawsing us up to windward. Just as I had got the last lanyard fastened, the canoes began to appear, coming round the island by the further passage, and promising to overtake us in the course of the next twenty minutes. The crisis demanded decision, and I determined to get the jib on the ship. Accordingly, I was soon on deck.

Having so much the confidence of the savages, who now fancied their return depended on me, I soon had them at work, and we had the stay set up in two or three minutes. I then ran out and cast off the gaskets, when my boys began to hoist at a signal from me. I have seldom been so happy as when I saw that large sheet of canvas open to the air. The sheet was hauled in and belayed as fast as possible, and then it struck me I should not have time to do any more before the canoes would overtake us. It was my wish to communicate with Marble. While passing aft, to effect this object, I paused a moment to examine the movement of the canoes; old Smudge, the whole time, expressing his impatience that the ship did not turn round. I make no doubt I should have been murdered a dozen times, had I lives enough, were it not that the savages felt how dependent they were on me for the government of the vessel. I began to see my importance, and grew bold in proportion.

As for the canoes, I took a look at them through a glass. They were about half a mile distant, and ceased paddling, and were lying close together, seemingly in consultation. I fancied the appearance of the ship, under canvas, had alarmed them, and that they began to think we had regained the vessel, and were getting her in sailing condition again, and that it might not be prudent to come too near. Could I confirm this impression, a great point would be gained. Under the pretense of making more sail, in order to get the ship's head round, a difficulty I had to explain to Smudge by means of signs some six or eight times, I placed the savages at the *main*-topmast mast-rope, and told them to drag. This was a task likely to keep them occupied, and what was more, it kept them all looking forward, leaving me affecting to be busied aft. I had given Smudge a cigar, too, to put him in good humor, and I had also taken the liberty to light one for myself.

Our guns had all been primed, leveled, and had their tompions taken out the night before, in readiness to repel any assault that might be made. I had only to remove the apron from the after-gun, and it was ready to be discharged. Going to the wheel, I put the helm hard up, until our broadside bore on the canoes. Then glancing along my gun, until I saw it had a tolerable range, I clapped the cigar to the priming, springing back to the wheel, and putting the helm down. The explosion produced a general yell among the savages, several of whom actually leaped into the chains ready to go overboard, while Smudge rushed toward me, fiercely brandishing his knife. I thought my time had come! but perceiving that the ship was luffing fast, I motioned eagerly forward, to draw the attention of my assailant in that quarter. The vessel was coming-to, and Smudge was easily induced to believe it was the commencement of turning round. The breathing time allowed me to mys-

tify him with a few more signs; after which he rejoined his people, showed them exultingly the ship still luffing, and, I make no doubt, he thought himself, and induced the rest to think, that the gun had a material agency in producing all these apparent changes. As for the canoes, the grape had whistled so near them that they began to paddle back, doubtless under the impression that we were again masters of the ship, and had sent them this hint to keep aloof.

Thus far I had succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations; and I began to entertain lively hopes of not only saving my life, but of recovering the command of the vessel. Could I manage to get her out of sight of land, my services would be so indispensable as almost to insure success. The coast was very low, and a run of six or eight hours would do this, provided the vessel's head could be kept in the right direction. The wind, moreover, was freshening, and I judged that the *Crisis* had already four knots way on her. Less than twenty miles would put all the visible coast under water. But it was time to say something to Marble. With a view to lull distrust, I called Smudge to the companion-way, in order that he might hear what passed, though I felt satisfied, now that the Dipper was out of the ship, not a soul remained among the savages who could understand a syllable of English, or knew anything of vessels. The first call brought the mate to the door. "Well, Miles; what is it?" he asked; "what meant the gun, and who fired it?"

"All right, Mr. Marble. I fired the gun to keep off the canoes, and it has had the effect I wished."

"Yes; my head was out of the cabin window at the time, for I believed the ship was wearing, and thought you had given up, and were going back into port. I saw the round-shot strike within twenty fathoms of the canoes, and as for the grape, some of it flew beyond them. Why, we are more than half a league from the land, boy! Will Smudge stand that much longer?"

I then told Marble precisely how we were situated on deck, the sail we were under, the number of savages we had on board, and the notion the savages entertained on the subject of turning the ship round. It is not easy to say which listened with the most attention, Marble or Smudge. The latter made frequent gestures for me to turn the ship toward the coast, for by this time she had the wind abeam again, and was once more running in a straight line. It was necessary, on more accounts than one, to adopt some immediate remedy for the danger that began to press on me anew. Not only must Smudge and his associates be pacified, but, as the ship got into the offing, she began to feel the ground-swell, and her spars aloft were anything but secure. The main topmast was about half-up, and it was beginning to surge and move in the cap in a way I did not like. It is true, there was not much danger yet; but the wind was rising, and what was to be done ought to be done at once. I was not sorry, however, to perceive that five or six of the savages, Smudge among the number, began to betray signs of seasickness. I would have given Clawbonny at the moment to have had all the rascals in rough water!

I now endeavored to make Smudge understand the necessity of my having assistance from below, both to assist in turning the vessel, and in getting the yards and masts into their places. The old fellow shook his head and looked grave at this. I saw he was not sick enough yet to be indifferent about his life. After a time, however, he pronounced the names of Neb and Yo, the blacks having attracted the attention of the savages, the last being the cook. I understood him he would suffer these two to come to my assistance, provided it could be done without endangering his own ascendency. Three unarmed men could hardly be dangerous to twenty-five who were armed; and then I suspected that he fancied the negroes would prove allies to himself, in the event of a struggle, rather than foes. As for Neb, he made a fatal mistake; nor was he much nearer the truth in regard to Joe—or Yo, as he called him—the cook feeling quite as

much for the honor of the American flag as the fairest-skinned seaman in the country. It is generally found that the loyalty of the negroes is of proof.

I found means to make Smudge understand the manner in which these two blacks could be got on deck without letting up the rest. As soon as he fairly comprehended the means to be used, he cheerfully acquiesced, and I made the necessary communication to Marble. A rope was sent down over the stern-boat to the cabin windows, and Neb took a turn round his body; when he was hauled up to the gunwale of the boat, into which he was dragged by the assistance of the savages. The same process was used with Joe. Before the negroes were permitted to go aloft, however, Smudge made a brief oration, in which oracular sentences were blended with significant gestures, and indications of what they were to expect in the event of bad behavior. After this, I sent the blacks into the main-top, and glad enough I thought they were both to get there.

Thus re-enforced, we had the main topmast fidded in a very few minutes. Neb was then directed to set up the rigging, and to clear away the yard, so it might be got into its place. In a word, an hour passed in active exertions, at the end of which we had everything rove, bent, and in its place on the mainmast, from the topmast-head to the deck. The topgallant-mast was lying fore and aft in the waist, and could not then be touched; nor was it necessary. I ordered the men to loosen both sails, and to overhaul down their rigging. In the eyes of Smudge, this looked highly promising; and the savages gave a yell of delight when they saw the topsail fairly filled and drawing. I added the mainsail to the pressure, and then the ship began to walk off the coast, at a rate that promised all I hoped for. It was now necessary for me to stick by the wheel, of the uses of which Smudge began to obtain some notions. At this time, the vessel was more than two leagues from the island, and objects began to look dim along the coast. As for the canoes, they could no longer be seen, and chasing us any further was quite out of the question. I felt that the crisis was approaching.

Smudge and his companions now became more and more earnest on the subject of turning the ship round. The indistinctness of the land began seriously to alarm them, and sea-sickness had actually placed four of their number flat on the deck. I could see that the old fellow himself was a good deal affected, though his spirit, and the risks he ran, kept him in motion and vigilantly on the watch. It was necessary to seem to do something; and I sent the negroes up into the fore-top to get the topsail-yard in its place, and the sail set. This occupied another hour, before we were entirely through, when the land was getting nearly *awash*. As soon as the mizzen-topsail was set, I braced sharp up and brought the ship close upon the wind. This caused the Indians to wilt down like flowers under a burning sun, just as I expected; there being, by this time, a seven-knot breeze, and a smart head-sea on. Old Smudge felt that his forces were fast deserting him, and he now came to me, in a manner that would not be denied, and I felt the necessity of doing something to appease him. I got the savages stationed as well as I could, hauled up the mainsail, and put the ship in stays. We tacked better than I could have believed possible, and when my wild captors saw that we were actually moving in the direction of the land again, their delight was infinite. Their leader was ready to hug me; but I avoided this pleasure in the best manner I could. As for the consequences, I had no apprehensions, knowing we were too far off to have any reason to dread the canoes, and being certain it was easy enough to avoid them in such a breeze.

Smudge and his companions were less on the alert, as soon as they perceived the ship was going in the proper direction. They probably believed the danger in a measure over, and they began to yield a little to their physical sufferings. I called Neb to the wheel, and leaning over the taffrail, I succeeded in getting Marble to a cabin window, without alarming Smudge.

I then told the mate to get all his forces in the forecastle, having observed that the Indians avoided that part of the vessel, on account of the heavy plunges she occasionally made, and possibly because they fancied our people were all aft. As soon as the plan was understood, I strolled forward, looking up at the sails, and touching a rope, here and there, like one bent on his ordinary duty. The savage stationed at the fore-scuttle was as sick as a dog, and with streaming eyes, he was paying the landsman's tribute to the sea. The hatch was very strong, and it was secured simply by its hasp and a bit of iron thrust through it. I had only to slip my hand down, remove the iron, throw open the hatch, when the ships company streamed up on deck, Marble leading.

It was not a moment for explanations. I saw at a glance that the mate and his followers regarded the situation of the ship very differently from what I did myself. I had now been hours with the savages, and attained a little of their confidence, and knew how dependent they were on myself for their final safety; all of which, in a small degree, disposed me to treat them with some of the lenity I fancied I had received from them, in my own person. But, Marble and the crew had been chafing below, like caged lions, the whole time, and as I afterward learned, had actually taken an unanimous vote to blow themselves up, before they would permit the Indians to retain the control of the vessel. Then poor Captain Williams was much beloved forward, and his death remained to be avenged. I would have said a word in favor of my captors, but the first glance I got at the flushed face of the mate told me it would be useless. I turned, therefore, to the sick savage who had been left as a sentinel over the fore-scuttle, to prevent his interference. This man was armed with the pistols that had been taken from me, and he showed a disposition to use them. I was too quick in my motions, however, falling upon him so soon as to prevent one who was not expert with the weapons from using them. We clinched, and fell on the deck together, the Indian letting the pistols fall to meet my grasp.

As this occurred, I heard the cheers of the seamen; and Marble, shouting out to "revenge Captain Williams," gave the order to charge. I soon had my own fellow perfectly at my mercy, and got him so near the end of the jib downhaul, as to secure him with a turn or two of that rope. The man made little resistance after the first onset; and, catching up the pistols, I left him, to join in what was doing aft. As I lay on the deck, I heard several plunges into the water, and then half a dozen of most cruelly crushing blows, succeeded. Not a shot was fired by either party, though some of our people, who had carried all their arms below the night the ship was seized, used their pikes with savage freedom. By the time I got as far aft as the main-mast, the vessel was our own. Nearly half the Indians had thrown themselves into the sea; the remaining dozen had either been knocked in the head like beeves, or were stuck, like so many porkers. The dead bodies followed the living into the sea. Old Smudge alone remained, at the moment at which I have spoken.

The leader of the savages was examining the movements of Neb, at the moment the shout was raised; and the black, abandoning the wheel, threw his arms round those of the old man, holding him like a vise. In this situation he was found by Marble and myself, who approached at the same instant, one on each side of the quarter-deck.

"Overboard with the blackguard!" called out the excited mate; "overboard with him, Neb, like a trooper's horse!"

"Hold," I interrupted; "spare the old wretch, Mr. Marble; he spared me."

A request from me would, at any moment, outweigh an order from the captain himself, so far as the black was concerned, else Smudge would certainly have gone into the ocean, like a bundle of straw. Marble had in him a good deal of the indifference to bodily suffering that is generated by habit, and, aroused, he was a dangerous, and sometimes a hard man; but, in the main, he was not cruel; and

then he was always manly. In the short struggle which had passed, he had actually dropped his pike, to knock an Indian down with his fist; bundling the fellow through a port without ceremony, ere he had time to help himself. But he disdained striking Smudge, with such odds against him; and he went to the helm, himself, bidding Neb secure the prisoner. Glad of this little relief to a scene so horrible, I ran forward, intending to bring my own prisoner aft, and to have the two confined together below. But I was too late. One of the Philadelphians had just got the poor wretch's head and shoulders through the bow-port, and I was barely in time to see his feet disappear.

Not a cheer was given for our success. When all was over, the men stood gazing at each other, stern, frowning, and yet with the aspects of those who felt they had been, in a manner, disgraced by the circumstances which led them to the necessity of thus regaining the command of their own vessel. As for myself, I ran and sprung upon the taffrail to look into the ship's wake. A painful sight met me, there! During the minute or two passed in the brief struggle, the *Crisis* had gone steadily ahead, like the earth moving in its orbit, indifferent to the struggles of the nations that are contending on its bosom. I could see heads and arms tossing in our track for a hundred fathoms, those who could not swim struggling to the last to preserve their existence. Marble, Smudge, and Neb, were all looking in the same direction, at that instant. Under an impulse I could not control, I ventured to suggest that we might yet tack and save several of the wretches.

"Let them drown, and be d——d!" was the chief mate's sententious answer.

"No—no—Masser Mile," Neb ventured to add, with a remonstrating shake of the head, "dat will nebber do—no good ebber come of Injin. If you don't drown him, he sartain drown you."

I saw it was idle to remonstrate, and by this time one dark spot after another began to disappear, as the victims sank in the ocean. As for Smudge, his eye was riveted on the struggling forms of his followers, in a manner to show that traces of human feeling are to be found, in some aspect or other, in every condition of life. I thought I could detect workings of the countenance of this being, indurated as his heart had become by a long life of savage ferocity, which denoted how keenly he felt the sudden destruction that had alighted on his tribe. He might have had sons and grandsons among those struggling wretches, on whom he was now gazing for the last time. If so, his self-command was almost miraculous; for, while I could see that he felt, and felt intensely, not a sign of weakness escaped him. As the last head sunk from view I could see him shudder, a suppressed groan escaped him, then he turned his face toward the bulwarks, and stood immovable as one of the pines of his own forests, for a long time. I asked Marble's permission to release the old man's arms, and the mate granted it, though not without growling a few curses on him, and on all who had been concerned in the late occurrences on board the ship.

There was too much duty to be done, to render all secure, to suffer us to waste much time in mere sympathy. All the topmast rigging, backstays, etc., had to be set up afresh, and gangs were sent about this duty, forward and aft. The blood was washed from the decks, and a portion of the crew got along the topgallant-masts, and pointed them. The topsails were all close reefed, the courses hauled up, the spanker and jib taken in, and the ship hove-to. It wanted but two hours of sunset when Mr. Marble had got things to his mind. We had crossed royal-yards, and had everything set that would draw, from the trucks down. The launch was in the water towing astern; the ship was then about a mile from the southern passage into the bay, toward which she was steering with the wind very much as it had been since an hour after sunrise, though slightly falling. Our guns were loose, and the crew was at quarters. Even I did not know what the new captain intended to do, for he had given his orders in the manner of one whose mind was too immovably made up

to admit of consultation. The larboard battery was manned, and orders had been given to see the guns on that side leveled and ready for firing. As the ship rushed past the island, in entering the bay, the whole of this broadside was delivered in among its bushes and trees. We heard a few yells in reply, that satisfied us the grape had told, and that Marble had not miscalculated the position of some of his enemies, at least.

When the ship entered the little bay, it was with a moderate and steady movement, the breeze being greatly broken by the forests. The main-yard was thrown aback, and I was ordered into the launch, with its crew armed. A swivel was in the bows of the boat, and I pulled into the creek in order to ascertain if there were any signs of the savages. In entering the creek the swivel was discharged according to orders, and we soon detected proofs that we disturbed a bivouac. I now kept loading and firing this little piece into the bushes, supporting it with occasional volleys of musketry, until pretty well satisfied that we had swept the shore effectually. At the bivouac I found the canoes and our own yawl, and what was some little revenge for what had happened, I also found a pile of no less than six hundred skins, which had doubtless been brought to trade with us, if necessary, in order to blind our eyes until the favorable moment for the execution of the conspiracy should offer. I made no scruple about confiscating these skins, which were taken on board the ship.

I went next to the island, on which I found one man dying with a grape-shot wound, and evidence that a considerable party had left it, as soon as they felt our fire. This party had probably gone outside the island, but it was getting too late to follow. On my return I met the ship coming out, Captain Marble being determined not to trust her inside another night. The wind was getting light, and the tides running fiercely in that high latitude, we were glad to make an offing again while there was still day. The success with the skins greatly mollified the new captain, who declared to me that after he had hanged Smudge in sight of his own shores, he should "feel something like himself again."

We passed the night under our topsails, standing off and on, with the wind steady, but light at the southward. Next morning, the duty of the ship went on as usual, until the men had breakfasted, when he stood again into the bay. This time, we hove-to so as to get one of the buoys, when we dropped the stream, leaving the topsails set. We then hove up the anchor, securing the range of cable that was bent to it. Both of the anchors, and their ranges of cable were thus recovered; the ends of the last being entered at the hawse-holes, and the pieces spliced. This work may have occupied us four hours; after which, the stream anchor was hove up, catted and finished. Marble then ordered a whip rove at the fore-yardarm.

I was on the quarter-deck when this command was suddenly given. I wished to remonstrate, for I had some tolerably accurate notions of legality, and the rights of persons. Still, I did not like to say anything; for Captain Marble's eye and manner were not the least in the trifling mood, at that instant. The whip was soon rove, and the men stood looking aft, in silent expectation.

"Take that murdering blackguard forward, fasten his arms behind his back, place him on the third gun, and wait for orders," added our new captain, sternly.

No one dared hesitate about obeying these orders, though I could see that one or two of the lads disliked the business.

"Surely," I ventured to say, in a low voice, "you are not in earnest, Mr. Marble!"

"*Captain* Marble, if you please, Mr. Wallingford. I am now master of this vessel, and you are her chief mate. I intend to hang your friend Smudge as an example to the rest of the coast. These woods are full of eyes at this moment; and the sight they'll presently see will do more good than forty missionaries, and threescore and ten years of preaching. Set the fellow up on the gun, men, as I ordered. This is the way to generalize with an Indian."

In a moment, there stood the hapless wretch, looking about him with an expression that denoted the consciousness of danger, though it was not possible he could comprehend the precise mode of his execution. I went to him, and pressed his hand, pointing upward, as much as to say his whole trust was now in the Great Spirit. The Indian understood me, for from that instant he assumed an air of dignified composure, like one every way prepared to meet his fate. It is not probable, with his habits, that he saw any peculiar hardship in his own case; for he had, doubtless, sacrificed many a prisoner under circumstances of less exasperation than that which his own conduct had provoked.

"Let two of the 'niggers' take a turn with the end of the whip round the chap's neck," said Marble, too dignified to turn Jack Ketch in person, and unwilling to set any of the white seamen at so ungracious an office. The cook, Joe, and another black, soon performed this revolting duty, from the odium of which a sailor seldom altogether escapes.

I now perceived Smudge looking upward, seeming to comprehend the nature of the fate that awaited him. The deeply-seated principle within him caused a dark shadow to pass over a countenance already so gloomy and wrinkled by suffering and exposure; and he turned his look wistfully toward Marble, at whose command each order in succession had been obeyed. Our new captain caught that gaze, and I was, for a single moment, in hope he would relent and let the wretch go. But Marble had persuaded himself he was performing a great act of nautical justice; nor was he aware himself how much he was influenced by a feeling allied to vengeance.

"Sway away!" he called out; and Smudge was dangling at the yardarm in a few seconds.

A block of wood could not have been more motionless than the body of this savage, after one quivering shudder of suffering had escaped it. There it hung, like a jewel-block, and every sign of life was soon taken away. In a quarter of an hour, a man was sent up, and cutting the rope, the body fell, with a sharp plunge, into the water, and disappeared.

At a later day, the account of this affair found its way into the newspapers at home. A few moralists endeavored to throw some doubts over the legality and necessity of the proceedings, pretending that more evil than good was done to the cause of sacred justice by such disregard of law and principles; but the feeling of trade, and the security of ships when far from home, were motives too powerful to be put down by the still, quiet remonstrances of reason and right. The abuses to which such practices would be likely to lead, in cases in which one of the parties constituted himself the law, the judge, and the executioner, were urged in vain against the active and ever-stimulating incentive of a love of gold. Still, I knew that Marble wished the thing undone when it was too late, it being idle to think of quieting the suggestions of that monitor God has implanted within us, by the meretricious and selfish approbation of those who judge of right and wrong by their own narrow standard of interest.

CHAPTER XV.

"*First Lord.*—Throca movonsas, cargo, cargo, cargo.
All.—Cargo, cargo, villianda par corbo, cargo.
Par.—O! ransome, ransome:—Do not hide mine eyes.
First Sold.—Boskos Thromuldo boskos.
Par.—I know you are the Muskos' regiment,
And I shall lose my life for want of language."
—ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

THE *Crisis* was tacked as soon as the body of Smudge was cut down, and she moved slowly, her crew maintaining a melancholy silence, out of the little haven. I never witnessed stronger evidence of sadness in the evolutions of a vessel; the slow and stately departure resembling that of mourners leaving the grave on which they had just heard the fall of the clod. Marble told me afterward he had been disposed to anchor, and remain until the body of poor Captain Williams should rise, as it probably would within the next

forty-eight hours; but the dread of a necessity of sacrificing more of the natives induced him to quit the fatal spot, without paying the last duties to our worthy old commander. I always regretted we did not remain, for I think no Indian would have come near us, had we continued in the harbor a month.

It was high noon when the ship once more issued into the broad bosom of the Pacific. The wind was at southeast, and as we drew off from the land, it came fresh and steady. About two, having an offing of ten or twelve miles, orders were issued to set all the larboard studding-sails, and we stood to the southward and westward under a press of canvas. Every one saw in this change a determination to quit the coast; nor did we regret the measure, for our trade had been quite successful, down to the moment of the seizure, but could hardly be prosperous after what had passed. I had not been consulted in the affair at all, but the second mate having the watch, I was now summoned to the cabin, and let into the secret of our future movements. I found Marble seated at the cabin table, with Captain Williams's writing-desk open before him, and sundry papers under examination.

"Take a seat, Mr. Wallingford," said the new master, with a dignity and manner suited to the occasion. "I have just been overhauling the old man's instructions from the owners, and find I have done right in leaving these hang-gallows rascals to themselves, and shaping our course to the next point of destination. As it is, the ship has done surprisingly well. There are $67,370 good Spaniards down in the run, and that for goods which I see are invoiced at just $26,240; and when you consider that no duties, port-charges, or commissions are to be deducted, but that the dollars under our feet are all our own, without any drawbacks, I call the operation a good one. Then that blundering through the straits, though it must never be talked of in any other light than a bold push for a quick passage, did us a wonderful deal of good, shoving us ahead near a month in time. It has put us so much ahead of our calculations, indeed, that I would cruise for Frenchmen for five or six weeks, were there the least probability that one of the chaps was to the westward of the Horn. Such not being the fact, however, and there still being a very long road before us, I have thought it best to push for the next point of destination. Read that page of the owners' ideas, Mr. Wallingford, and you will get their advice for just such a situation as that in which we find ourselves."

The passage pointed out by Captain Marble was somewhat parenthetical, and was simply intended to aid Captain Williams, in the event of his not being able to accomplish the other objects of his voyage. It had a place in the instructions, indeed, solely on account of a suggestion of Marble's himself, the project being one of those favorite schemes of the mate, that men sometimes maintain through thick or thin, until they get to be ruling thoughts. On Captain Williams it had not weighed a feather; his intention having been to proceed to the Sandwich Islands for sandal wood, which was the course then usually pursued by northwest traders, after quitting the coast. The parenthetical project, however, was to touch at the last island, procure a few divers, and proceed in quest of certain islands where it was supposed the pearl fishery would succeed. Our ship was altogether too large, and every way too expensive, to be risked in such an adventure, and so I told the ex-mate without any scruple. But this fishery was a "fixed idea," a quick road to wealth, in the new captain's mind, and finding it in the instructions, though simply as a contingent course, he was inclined to regard it as the great object of the voyage. Such it was in his eyes, and such it ought to be, as he imagined, in those of the owners.

Marble had excellent qualities in his way, but he was not fit to command a ship. No man could stow her better, fit her better, sail her better, take better care of her in heavy weather, or navigate her better; and yet he wanted the judgment necessary to manage the property that must be committed to his care, and

he had no more ideas of commercial thrift than if he had never been employed in any of the concerns of commerce. This was, in truth, the reason he had never risen any higher in his profession, the mercantile instinct—one of the liveliest and most acute to be found in natural history—forewarning his different owners that he was already in the berth nature and art had best qualified him to fill. It is wonderful how acute even dull men get to be, on the subject of money!

I own my judgment, such as it was at nineteen, was opposed to the opinion of the captain. I could see that the contingency contemplated by the instructions had not arisen, and that we should be acting more in conformity with the wishes of the owners by proceeding to the Sandwich Islands in quest of sandal wood, and thence to China, after a cargo of teas. Marble was not to be convinced, however, though I think my arguments shook him a little. What might have been the result, it is difficult to say, had not chance befriended the views of each of us, respectively. It is proper to add, that Marble availed himself of this opportunity to promote Talcott, who was brought into the cabin as third mate. I rejoiced greatly in this addition to our little circle on the quarter-deck, Talcott being a man of education, much nearer my own age than the two others, and united to me by unusual ties since our common adventure in the prize. I was not only rejoiced to be able to associate with him, but to hear him called *Mr.* Talcott.

We had a long, but mild passage to the Sandwich Islands. This group occupied a very different place, in the opinions of the world, in the year 1800, from that it fills to-day. Still it has made some small advances in civilization since the time of Cook. I am told there are churches, taverns, billiard tables, and stone dwellings in these islands now, which are fast turning to the Christian religion, and obtaining the medley of convenience, security, vice, roguery, law, and comfort that is known as civilization. It was far different then, our reception being by men who were but a small degree removed from savages. Among those who first came on board us, however, was the master of an American brig, belonging to Boston, whose vessel had got on a reef, and bilged. He intended to remain by the wreck, but wished to dispose of a considerable amount of sandal wood that was still in his vessel, and for the safety of which he was under great concern, as the first gale of wind might scatter it to the winds of the ocean. If he could obtain a fresh stock of goods to trade on, he proposed remaining on the islands until another vessel belonging to the same owners, which was expected in a few months, should arrive, on board which vessel he intended to embark with everything he could save from the wreck, and such wood as he could purchase in the interim. Captain Marble rubbed his hands with delight, when he returned from a visit to the wreck, his arrangements all completed.

"Luck is with us, Master Miles," he said, "and we'll be off for them pearl fisheries next week. I have bought all the sandal wood in the wreck, paying in trumpery, and at prices only about double Indian trade, and we will heave up, and carry the ship round to the wreck, and begin to take in this afternoon. There is capital holding-ground inside the reef, and the ship can be safely carried within a hundred fathoms of her cargo!"

All turned out as Marble had hoped and predicted, and the *Crisis* was back at her anchorage in front of the village, which is now the city of Honolulu, within the week named. We got our supply of hogs, and having procured four of the best divers going, we sailed in quest of Captain Marble's Eldorado of pearls. I was less opposed to the scheme than I had been, for we were now so much in advance of our time, that we could afford to pass a few weeks among the islands, previously to sailing for China. Our course was to the southwest, crossing the line in about 170° west longitude. There was a clear sea for more than a fortnight while we were near the equator, the ship making but little progress. Glad enough was I to hear the order given to turn more to the northward again, for the heat was op-

pressive, and this was inclining toward our route to China. We had been out from Owyhee, as it was then usual to call the island where Cook was killed—Hawaii, as it is called to-day—we had been out from this island about a month, when Marble came up to me one fine moonlight evening, in my watch, rubbing his hands, as was his custom when in good-humor, and broke out as follows:

"I'll tell you what, Miles," he said, "you and I have been salted down by Providence for something more than common! Just look back at all our adventures in the last three years, and see what they come to. Firstly, there was a shipwreck over here on the coast of Madagascar," jerking his thumb over a shoulder in a manner that was intended to indicate about two hundred degrees of longitude, that being somewhat near our present distance from the place he mentioned, in an air-line; "then followed the boat business under the Isle of Bourbon, and the affair with the privateer off Guadeloupe. Well, as if that weren't enough, we ship together again in this vessel, and a time we had of it with the French letter-of-marque. After that, a devil of a passage we made of it through the Straits of Magellan. Then came the melancholy loss of Captain Williams, and all that business; after which we got the sandalwood out of the wreck, which I consider the luckiest transaction of all."

"I hope you don't set down the loss of Captain Williams among our luck, sir!"

"Not I, but the stuff is all logged together you know; and in overhauling for one idee, in such a mess, a fellow is apt to get hold of another. As I was saying, we have been amazingly lucky, and I expect nothing else but we shall discover an island yet!"

"Can that be of any great service to us? There are so many owners ready to start up and claim such discoveries, that I question if it would do us any great benefit."

"Let them start up—who cares for them? We'll have the christening, and that's half the battle. Marble Land, Wallingford Bay, Talcott Hills, and Cape Crisis, would look well on the chart—ha! Miles?"

"I have no objection to see it, sir."

"Land ho!" cried the lookout on the forecastle.

"There it is now, by George," cried Marble, springing forward. "I overhauled the chart half an hour since, and there ought to be nothing within six hundred miles of us."

There it was, sure enough, and much nearer to us than was at all desirable. So near, indeed, that the wash of the breakers on the reef that so generally lies off from the low coral islands of the Pacific was distinctly audible from the ship. The moon gave a strong light, it is true, and the night was soft and balmy, but the air, which was very light, blew directly toward this reef, and then there were always currents to apprehend. We sounded, but got no bottom.

"Ay, this is one of your coral reefs, where a man goes on the rocks from off soundings, at a single jump," muttered Marble, ordering the ship brought by the wind on the best tack to haul off-shore. "No notice, and a wreck. As for anchoring in such a place, a fellow might as well run a line out to Japan; and, could an anchor find the bottom, the cable would have some such berth as a man who slept in a hammock filled with open razors."

All this was true enough; and we watched the effect of our change of course with the greatest anxiety. All hands were called, and the men were stationed in readiness to work the ship. But a few minutes satisfied us the hope of clawing off in so light an air was to the last degree vain. The vessel set in fast toward the reef, the breakers on which now became apparent, even by the light of the moon, the certain sign they were fearfully near.

This was one of those moments in which Marble could show himself to be a true man. He was perfectly calm and self-possessed; and stood on the taffrail, giving his orders, with a distinctness and precision I have never seen surpassed. I was kept in the chains, myself, to watch the casts of the lead. "No bottom," however, was the never-failing report; nor

was any bottom expected; it being known that these reefs were quite perpendicular on their seaward side. The captain called out to me, from time to time, to be active and vigilant, as our set in-shore was uncontrollable, and the boats, if in the water, as the launch could not be for twenty minutes, would be altogether useless. I proposed to lower the yawl, and to pull to leeward, to try the sounding, in order to ascertain if it were not possible to find bottom at some point short of the reef, on which we should hopelessly be set, unless checked by some such means, in the course of the next fifteen or twenty minutes.

"Do it at once, sir," cried Marble. "The thought is a good one, and does you credit, Mr. Wallingford."

I left the ship in less than five minutes, and pulled off, under the ship's lee-bow, knowing that tacking or wearing would be out of the question, under the circumstances. I stood up in the stern-sheets, and made constant casts with the hand-lead, with a short line, however, as the boat went foaming through the water. The reef was now plainly in sight, and I could see, as well as hear, the long, formidable ground-swells of the Pacific, while, fetching up against these solid barriers, they rolled over, broke, and went beyond the rocks in angry froth. At this perilous instant, when I would not have given the poorest acre of Clawbonny to have been the owner of the *Crisis*, I saw a spot to leeward that was comparatively still, or in which the water did not break. It was not fifty fathoms from me when first discovered, and toward it I steered, animating the men to redoubled exertions. We were in this narrow belt of smooth water, as it might be, in an instant, and the current sucked the boat through it so fast as to allow time to make but a single cast of the lead. I got bottom; but it was in six fathoms!

The boat was turned, and headed out again, as if life and death depended on the result. The ship was fortunately within sound of the voice, steering still by the wind, though setting three feet toward the reef for one made in the desired direction; and I hailed.

"What now, Mr. Wallingford?" demanded Marble, as calmly as if anchored near a wharf at home.

"Do you see the boat, sir?"

"Quite plainly;—God knows you are near enough to be seen."

"Has the ship steerage-way on her, Captain Marble?"

"Just that, and nothing more to boast of."

"Then I ask no questions; but try to follow the boat. It is the only hope; and it may succeed."

I got no answer; but I heard the deep, authoritative voice of Marble, ordering the "helm up" and the men, "to man the weather-braces." I could scarcely breathe, while I stood looking at the ship's bows, as they fell off, and noted her slow progress ahead. Her speed increased sensibly, however, and I kept the boat far enough to windward to give the vessel room fairly to enter the pass. At the proper moment, we moved toward the inlet, the *Crisis* keeping more and more away, in order to follow. I was soon in the pass itself, the water breaking within ten fathoms on each side of me, sending portions of its foam to the very blades of our oars; but the lead still gave me six fathoms. At the next cast, I got ten; and then the ship was at the point where I had just before found six. The breakers were roaring behind me, and I pulled round, and waited for the ship, steering to the southward, sounding as I went. I could see that the ship hauled up, and that I was already behind the reef. Straining my voice, I now called out—

"Anchor, sir—bear a hand and anchor, as soon as possible."

Not a word came back; but up went the courses, followed by the top-gallant sails, after which down went the jib. I heard the fore and main-top-sail halyards overhauling themselves, spite of the roar of the breakers, and then the ship luffed into the wind. Glad enough was I to hear the heavy plunge of one of the bowers, as it fell from the cat-head into the water. Even then I remained stationary to note the result. The ship took her scope of cable freely, after which

I observed that she was brought up. The next moment I was on board her.

"A close shave, Mr. Wallingford," said Marble, giving me a squeeze of the hand, that said more for his feelings than any words such a being could utter; "and many thanks for your piloting. Is not that land I see, away here to the leeward —more to the westward, boy?"

"It is, sir, beyond a doubt. It must be one of the coral islands; and this is the reef that usually lies to seaward from them. There is the appearance of trees ashore!"

"It's a discovery, youngster, and will make us all great names! Remember, this passage I call 'Miles's Inlet;' and to the reef I give the name of 'Yawl Reef.'"

I could not smile at this touch of Marble's vanity, for concern left me no thoughts but for the ship. The weather was now mild and the bay smooth: the night was fine, and it might be of the last importance to us to know something more of our situation. The cable might chafe off, probably *would*, so near a coral reef; and I offered to pull in toward the land, sounding as I went, and otherwise gaining the knowledge that might be necessary to our security. After a little reflection, the captain consented, ordering me to take provisions and water in the boat as the duty might detain me until morning.

I found the bay between the reef and the island about a league in *breadth*, and across its entire *width* the soundings did not vary much from ten fathoms. The outer barrier of rock, on which the sea broke, appeared to be an advanced wall, that the indefatigable little insects had erected, as it might be, in defense of their island, which had probably been raised from the depths of the ocean, a century or two ago, by some of their own ancestors. The gigantic works completed by these little aquatic animals are well known to navigators, and give us some tolerably accurate notions of the manner in which the face of the globe has been made to undergo some of its alterations. I found the land easy of access, low, wooded, and without any sign of habitation.

The night was so fine that I ventured inland, and after walking more than a mile, most of the distance in a grove of cocoa and bananas, I came to the basin of water that is usually found in the islands of this particular formation. The inlet from the sea was at no great distance, and I sent one of the men back to the yawl, with orders for the boat to proceed thither. I next sounded the inlet and the bay, and found everywhere a sandy bottom, and about ten fathoms of water. As I expected, the shoalest spot was the inlet, but in this, which I sounded thoroughly, there was nowhere less than five. It was now midnight, and I should have remained on the island until morning, to make further surveys by daylight, had we not seen the ship under her canvas, and so much nearer to us than we had supposed possible, as to satisfy me she was drifting in fast toward the land. Of course I did not hesitate, but pulled on board.

It was as I suspected. The rocks so near the reef had chafed off the cable; the ship struck adrift, and Marble was under his canvas waiting my return, in order to ascertain where he might anchor anew. I told him of the lagoon in the center of the island, and gave him every assurance of there being water enough to carry in any craft that floats. My reputation was up, in consequence of the manner the ship had been taken through the first inlet, and I was ordered to con her into this new haven.

The task was not difficult. The lightness of the wind, and uncertainty about the currents proving the only source of embarrassment, I succeeded in finding the passage, after a short trial; and sending the boat ahead, under Talcott, as an additional precaution, soon had the *Crisis* floating in the very center of this natural deck. Sail was shortened as we came in, and the ship made a flying moor; after which we lay as securely as if actually in some basin wrought by art. It is my opinion, the vessel would have ridden out the hardest gale, or anything short of a hurricane, at single anchor, in that place. The sense of security was now so strong upon us, that we rolled up our canvas, set

an anchor-watch of only one man, and turned in.

I never laid my head down, on board ship, with greater satisfaction than I did that night. Let the truth be frankly stated. I was perfectly satisfied with myself. It was owing to my decision and vigilance that the ship was saved, when outside the reef, out of all question; and I think she would have been lost after she had struck adrift, had I not discovered her present berth. There she was, however, with land virtually all around her, a good bottom, plenty of water, and well moored. As I have said already, she could not be better secured in an artificial dock. In the midst of the Pacific, away from all custom-house officers, in a recently discovered and uninhabited island, there was nothing to fear. Men sleep soundly in such circumstances, and I should have been in a deep slumber in a minute after I was in my berth, had not Marble's conversation kept me awake, quite unwillingly on my part, for five minutes. His stateroom door was open, and through it, the following discourse was held.

"I think, on the whole," commenced the captain, "it will be better to *generalize* a little more"—this was a favorite expression of the ex-mate's, and one he often used without exactly knowing its application himself. "Yes, to generalize a little more; it shall be Marble Land, Wallingford Bay, Yawl Reef, *Talcott* inlet, Miles's Anchorage—and a d——d bad anchorage it was, Miles; but never mind, we must take the good with the bad in this wicked world."

"Very true, sir: but, as for taking that anchorage, you must excuse me, as I shall never take it again."

"Perhaps not. Well, this is what I call comfort—ha! Talcott? Is Talcott asleep, Miles?"

"He and the second mate are hard at it, sir—full and by, and going ten knots," I muttered, wishing my tormentor in Japan, at the moment.

"Ay; they are rackers at a sleep! I say, Miles, such a discovery as this will make a man's fortune! The world generalizes in discoveries, altogether, making no great matter of distinction between your Columbuses, Cooks, or Marbles. An island is an island, and he who first discovers it has the credit. Poor Captain Williams! he would have sailed this ship for a whole generation, and never found anything in the way of novelty."

"Except the straits," I muttered, very indistinctly, breathing deep, and hard.

"Ay, that *was* an affair! Hadn't you and I been aboard, the ship never would have done that. We are the very offspring of luck! There was the affair of the wreck off Madagascar—there are bloody currents in the Pacific, too, I find, Miles."

"Yes, sir—hard-a-weather——"

"The fellow's dreaming. One word, boy, before you cut loose from all reason and reflection. Don't you think it would be a capital idea to poke in a little patriotism among the names! patriotism goes so far in our part of the world. Congress Rocks would be a good title for the highest part of the reef, and Washington Sands would do for the landing you told me of. Washington should have a finger in the pie."

"Crust isn't down, sir."

"The fellow's off, and I may as well follow, though it is not easy to sleep on the honor of a discovery like this. Good-night, Miles!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Such was the account Marble afterward gave me of the termination of the dialogue. Sleep, sleep, sleep! Never did men enjoy their rest more than we did for the next five hours, the ship being as silent as a church on a week day, during the whole time. For myself, I can safely say I heard nothing, or knew nothing, until I was awakened by a violent shake of the shoulder. Supposing myself to have been aroused for an ordinary watch at sea, I was erect in an instant, and found the sun's rays streaming into my face through the cabin windows. This prevented me for a moment from seeing that I had been disturbed by Captain Marble himself. The latter waited until he perceived I could understand him, and then he said in a grave meaning manner—

"Miles, there is a mutiny in the ship! Do you understand me, Mr. Wallingford?—a bloody mutiny!"

"A mutiny, Captain Marble! You confound me, sir—I had thought our people perfectly satisfied."

"Umph! one never knows whether the copper will come up head or tail. I thought when I turned in last night, it was to take the surest nap I ever tasted afloat; and here I awake, and find a mutiny."

I was on my feet and dressing in an instant, as a matter of course, having first gone to the berths of the two other mates and given each a call.

"But how do you know this, Captain Marble?" I resumed, as soon as there was a chance. "I hear no disturbance, and the ship is just where we left her," glancing through the cabin windows; "I think you must be mistaken, sir."

"Not I. I turned out ten minutes since, and was about to go on deck to get a look at your basin, and breathe the fresh air, when I found the companion-doors fastened, precisely Smudge-fashion. I suppose you will allow that no regular ship's company would dare to fasten the officers below, unless they intended to seize the craft."

"This is very extraordinary! Perhaps some accident has befallen the doors. Did you call out, sir?"

"I thumped like an admiral, but got no answer. When on the point of trying the virtue of a few kicks, I overheard a low laugh on deck, and that let me into the secret of the state of the nation at once. I suppose you will all admit, gentlemen, when sailors laugh at their officers, as well as batten them down, that they must be somewhat near a state of mutiny."

"It does look so, indeed, sir. We had better arm the moment we are dressed, Captain Marble."

"I have done that already, and you will each find loaded pistols in my stateroom."

In two minutes from that moment all four of us were in a state for action, each man armed with a brace of ship's pistols, well loaded and freshly primed. Marble was for making a rush at the cabin doors at once, but I suggested the improbability of the steward or Neb's being engaged in any plot against the officers, and thought it might be well to ascertain what had become of the two blacks before we commenced operations. Talcott proceeded instantly to the steerage where the steward slept, and returned in a moment to report that he had found him sound asleep in his berth.

Re-enforced by this man, Captain Marble determined to make his first demonstration by way of the forecastle, where, by acting with caution, a surprise on the mutineers might be effected. It will be remembered that a door communicated with the forecastle, the fastenings of which were on the side of "'twixt decks." Most of the cargo being in the lower hold there was no difficulty in making our way to this door, where we stopped and listened, in order to learn the state of things on the other side of the bulkhead. Marble had whispered to me, as we groped our way along in the sort of twilight which pervaded the place, the hatches being on and secured, that "them bloody Philadelphians" must be at the bottom of the mischief, as our old crew were a set of as "peaceable, well-disposed chaps as ever eat duff (dough) out of a kid."

The result of the listening was to produce a general surprise. Out of all question, snoring, and that on no small scale of the gamut of Morpheus, was unequivocally heard. Marble instantly opened the door, and we entered the forecastle, pistols in hand. Every berth had its tenant, and all hands were asleep! Fatigue, and the habit of waiting for calls, had evidently kept each of the seamen in his berth, until that instant. Contrary to usage, in so warm a climate, the scuttle was on, and a trial soon told us it was fast.

"To generalize on this idee, Miles," exclaimed the captain, "I should say we are again battened down by savages!"

"It does indeed look so, sir; and yet I saw no sign of the island's being inhabited. It may be well, Captain Marble, to muster the crew, that we may learn who's who."

"Quite right—do you turn 'em up, and send 'em all aft into the cabin, where we have more daylight."

I set about awaking the people, which was not difficult, and in a few minutes everybody was sent aft. Following the crew, it was soon found that only one man was missing, and he was the very individual whom we had left on deck, when we had all gone below on securing the ship. Every soul belonging to the vessel was present in cabin or steerage, but this solitary man—Philadelphians and all!

"It can never be that Harris has dared to trifle with us," said Talcott; "and yet it does look surprisingly like it."

"Quite sure, Miles, that Marble Land is an uninhabited island?" said the captain, interrogatively.

"I can only say, sir, that it is as much like all the other uninhabited coral islands we have passed, as one pea is like another; and that there were no signs of a living being visible last night. It is true we saw but little of the island, though to appearances there was not much to see."

"Unluckily, all the men's arms are on deck, in the arm-chest, or strapped to the boom or masts. There is no use, however, in dillydallying against one man; so I will make a rumpus that will soon bring the chap to his bearings." Hereupon Marble made what he called a rumpus in good earnest. I thought, for a moment, he would kick the cabin doors down.

"'Andzomelee — 'andzomelee," said some one on deck. "Vat for you make so much kick?"

"Who the devil are you?" demanded Marble, kicking harder than ever. "Open the cabin doors, or I'll kick them down, and yourself overboard."

"Monsieur — sair," rejoined another voice, "*tenez*—you air *prisonnier. Comprenez-vous*—prisonair, eh?"

"These are Frenchmen, Captain Marble," I exclaimed, "and we are in the hands of the enemy."

This was astounding intelligence, so much so, that all had difficulty in believing it. A further parley, however, destroyed our hopes, little by little, until we entered into an arrangement with those on deck, to the following effect: I was to be permitted to go out, in order to ascertain the real facts of our situation; while Marble and the remainder of the crew were to remain below, passive, until the result should be reported. Under this arrangement, one of the cabin doors was opened, and I sallied forth.

Astonishment almost deprived me of the power of vision, when I looked around me. Quite fifty armed white men, sailors and natives of France, by their air and language, crowded around me, as curious to see me, as I could possibly be to see them. In their midst was Harris, who approached me with an embarrassed and sorrowful air—

"I know I deserve death, Mr. Wallingford," this man commenced; "but I fell asleep after so much work, and everything looking so safe and out-of-harm's way like; and when I woke up, I found these people on board, and in possession of the ship."

"In the name of wonder, whence come they, Harris? Is there a French ship at the island?"

"By all I can learn and see, sir, they are the crew of a wrecked letter-of-marque—an Indiaman of some sort or other; and finding a good occasion to get off the island, and make a rich prize, they have helped themselves to the poor *Crisis*—God bless her! say I, though she is now under the French flag, I suppose."

I looked up at the gaff, and, sure enough, there was flying the *tri-color!*

CHAPTER XVI.

"The morning air blows fresh on him;
The waves dance gladly in his sight;
The sea-birds call, and wheel and skim
O, blessed morning light!
He doth not hear their joyous call; he sees
No beauty in the wave, nor feels the breeze."
—DANA.

TRUTH is, truly, often stranger than fiction.

The history of the circumstances that brought us into the hands of our enemies will fully show this. *La Pauline* was a ship of six hundred tons, that carried

letters-of-marque from the French government. She sailed from France a few weeks after we had left London, bound on a voyage somewhat similar to our own, though neither sea-otter skins, sandal-wood, nor pearls, formed any part of her contemplated bargains. Her first destination was the French islands off Madagascar, where she left part of her cargo, and took in a few valuables in return. Thence she proceeded to the Philippine Islands, passing in the track of English and American traders, capturing two of the former and sinking them after taking out such portions of cargo as suited her own views. From Manilla, *La Pauline* shaped her course for the coast of South America, intending to leave certain articles brought from France, others purchased at Bourbon, the Isle of France, and the Philippines, and divers bales and boxes found in the holds of her prizes, in that quarter of the world, in exchange for the precious metals. In effecting all this, Monsieur Le Compte, her commander, relied, firstly, on the uncommon sailing of his ship; secondly, on his own uncommon boldness and dexterity, and, thirdly, on the well-known disposition of the South Americans to smuggle. Doubloons and dollars taking up but little room, he reserved most of the interior of his vessel, after his traffic on the "Main," for such property as might be found in the six or eight prizes he calculated, with certainty, on making, after getting to the eastward of the Horn. All these well-grounded anticipations had been signally realized down to a period of just three months to a day prior to our own arrival at this unhappy island.

On the night of the day just mentioned, *La Pauline*, without the smallest notice of the vicinity of any danger, running in an easy bowline and without much sea, had brought up on another part of the very reef from which we had made so narrow an escape. The rocks being coral, there was little hope for her; and, in fact, they appeared through her bottom within two hours after she struck. The sugars taken in at the Isle of France, as a ground tier of ballast, were soon rendered of doubtful value, as a matter of course, but the weather remaining pleasant, Captain Le Compte succeeded, by means of his boats, in getting everything else of value on the island, and forthwith set about breaking up the wreck, in order to construct a craft that might carry himself and his people to some civilized land. Having plenty of tools, and something like sixty men, great progress had been made in the work, a schooner of about ninety tons being then so far completed as to be nearly ready to be put in the water. Such was the state of things, when, one fine night, we arrived in the manner already related. The French kept constant lookouts, and it seems we were seen, a distant speck on the ocean, just as the sun set, while the low trees of the island eluded our vigilance.

By the aid of a good night glass our movements were watched, and a boat was about to be sent out to warn us of our danger, when we passed within the reef. Captain Le Compte knew the chances were twenty to one that we were an enemy and he chose to lie concealed to watch the result. As soon as we had anchored within the basin, and silence prevailed in the ship, he manned his own gig, and pulled with muffled oars up under our bows, to reconnoiter. Finding everything quiet, he ventured into the fore-chains, and thence on deck, accompanied by three of his men. He found Harris snoring, with his back supported against a gun-carriage, and immediately secured him. Then it only remained to close the fore-scuttle and the cabin-doors, and to fasten them, to have us all prisoners below. The boat was sent for more men, and hours before any of us in the berths were awake, the ship had effectually changed masters. Harris told our story, and the captors knew our whole history, from the day of sailing down to the present time.

Much of this I learned in subsequent conversations with the French, but enough of it was related to me then to let me understand the outlines of the truth. My eyes also let me into many secrets. I found the island, by daylight, substantially as I had supposed it to be. It was not so large, however, as it had seemed to me by the aid of the moon,

though its general character was the same. The basin in which the ship lay might have covered a hundred and fifty acres in extent, the belt of land which encircled it varying in breadth from a quarter of a mile to three miles. Most of the island was an open grove, lying at an elevation of from ten to thirty feet above the ocean; and we ascertained there were several springs of the sweetest water on it. Nature, by one of its secret processes, had covered the earth with a beautiful short grass; and the French, with their usual attention to the table, and their commendable activity, had already several materials for salads, etc., in full growth. String beans might be had for asking, and *petits pois* were literally a drug. I saw the tents of the French extending in a line beneath the shades of the trees; and there was *La Petite Pauline* (the schooner) on her ways, actually undergoing the process of receiving her first coat of paint. As for *La Pauline* herself, I could just discover her lower mastheads, inclining an angle of forty-five degrees from the perpendicular, through a vista in the trees.

There was a good-humored common sense in all the proceedings of Monsieur Le Compte, that showed he was a philosopher in the best sense of the word. He took things without repining himself, and wished to make others as happy as circumstances would allow. At his suggestion I invited Marble on deck; and after making my own commander acquainted with the state of the facts, we both listened to the propositions of our captor. Monsieur le Compte, all his officers, and not a few of his men, had been prisoners, some time or other, in England, and there was no difficulty in carrying on the negotiations in our mother tongue.

"*Votre bâtiment*—your *sheep*, shall become French—*bien entendu*," commenced our captor; "vid her *car gaison*—rig, and *tout cela*. *Bien; c'est convenu*. I shall not exact *rigueur* in *mes conditions*. If you shall have *possible* to take your *sheep* from *nous autres Français—d'accord*. Every man for himself *et sa nation*. Zere is the *pavillion Français*—and zere it shall fly, so long as we shall not help—*mais—parole d'honneur*, ze prize come sheep, and shall be sell very dear—*entendez vous? Bien*. Now, sair, I shall put you and all your peepl' on ze island, vere you shall take our place, while we take your place. Ze arm shall be in our hand while ze sheep stay, but we leave you *fusils, poudre et tout cela*, behind."

This was, nearly verbatim, the programme of capitulation as laid down by Captain Le Compte. As for Marble, it was not in his nature to acquiesce in such an arrangement without much caviling and contention. But *cui bono?* We were in Monsieur Le Compte's hands; and though disposed to deal very handsomely by us, it was easy enough to see he was determined to make his own conditions. I succeeded, at last, in making Marble understand that resistance was useless; and he submitted, though with some such grace as a man who has not been mesmerized, submits to an amputation—those who *have*, are said rather to delight in the amusement.

The terms of the capitulation—and they differed but little from surrendering at discretion—were no sooner agreed to, than our people were ordered into the forecastle, whence they were transferred to the boats, in readiness to be sent ashore. All the chests and private effects were moved out, in the most honorable manner, and sent into *La Pauline's* boats, which lay prepared to receive them. As for us officers, we were put in the gig, Neb and the cabin steward being charged with the duty of looking after our private property. When everybody, the blacks excepted, was in a boat, we shoved off and proceeded toward the landing, as chopfallen and melancholy a party as ever took possession of a newly-discovered country. Marble affected to whistle, for he was secretly furious at the *nonchalance* manifested by Captain Le Compte; but I detected him in getting parts of Monny Musk and the Irish Washerwoman into the same strain. To own the truth, the ex-mate was morally much disturbed. As for myself, I considered the affair as an incident of war, and cared much less.

"*Voila, messieurs,*" exclaimed Monsieur Le Compte, flourishing his arms, with an air of unsurpassed generosity; "you shall be master here so soon after we shall go away, and take our leetl' property wid us!"

"He's d—d generous, Miles," growled Marble, in my ear. "He'll leave us the island, and the reef, and the cocoanuts, when he has gone off with our ship, and her cargo. I'll bet all I'm worth he tows off his bloody schooner, in the bargain."

"There is no use in complaining, sir; and by keeping on good terms with the French, we may fare the better."

The truth of this was soon apparent. Captain Le Compte invited us to share his breakfast, and we repaired to the tent of the French officers, with that purpose. In the meantime, the French sailors were transferring the few articles they intended to carry away, to the ship, with the generous object of leaving their own tents to the immediate occupation of us prisoners. As Monsieur Le Compte's plan was to proceed to the Spanish Main in order to complete his contemplated traffic in that quarter, no sooner were the tents prepared than the French began also to ship such articles of their own as it had originally been proposed to exchange for Spanish dollars. In the meantime, we sat down to breakfast.

"*O'est la fortune de guerre!*—vat you call fortune of war, *messieurs,*" observed Captain Le Compte, whirling the stick in a vessel of chocolate, in a very artistical manner, all the while. "*Bon—c'est excellente. Antoin.*"

Antoin appeared in the shape of a well-smoked, copper-colored cabin-boy. He was told to take a small pitcher of the chocolate, with Captain Le Compte's compliments, to *mademoiselle,* and to tell her there was now every prospect of their quitting the island in a very few days, and of seeing *la belle France* in the course of the next four or five months. This was said in French, and rapidly, with the vehemence of one who felt all he uttered, and more too, but I knew enough of the language to understand its drift.

"I suppose the fellow is generalizing on our misfortunes, in his d—d lingo," growled Marble; "but let him look out—he's not home yet, by many a thousand miles!"

I endeavored to explain it all to Marble; but it was useless; he insisted the Frenchman was sending chocolate from his own table to his crew, in order to play the magnifico, on the score of his own good luck. There was no use in "kicking against the pricks," and I let Marble enjoy the pleasure of believing the worst of his captor; a sort of Anglo-Saxon propensity that has garnished many a page in English and American history—to say nothing of the propensities and histories of others, among the great family of nations.

When breakfast was over, Monsieur Le Compte led me aside, in a walk under the trees, to explain his views and intentions. He gave me to understand I had been selected for this communication on account of his observing the state of mind of my captain. I also comprehended a little French, which was quite convenient in a conversation with one who interlarded his English so much with phrases taken from his mother tongue. I was given to understand that the French would put the schooner into the water that evening, and that we should find her masts, rigging, and sails all fitted for her. With activity, she could be ready to quit the island in a fortnight, at the furthest. A portion of our own provisions would be landed, as better suited to our habits than those taken from *La Pauline;* while a portion of the last would be transferred to the *Crisis,* for the same reason, as applied to the French. As for water-casks, etc., they were all arranged; everything of the sort having been taken from the wreck, with little or no difficulty, immediately after the loss of the ship. In a word, we should have little more to do than to step the masts, rig our craft, stow her hold, and proceed at once to the nearest friendly port.

"I zink you shall go to Canton," added Monsieur Le Compte. "Ze distance shall not be much more than to Sout' America; and zere you shall find

plenty of your *compatriotes*. Of course, you can sleep and go *chez vous*—vat you call 'home,' with *toute le facilité*. Oui *—cet arrangement est admirable.*"

So the arrangement might appear to him, though I confess to a decided preference to remaining in the "blind *Crisis*," as our men had got to call her, after her blundering through the Straits of Magellan.

"*Allons!*" exclaimed the French captain, suddenly. "We are near ze tent of mademoiselle—we shall go and demand how she carry herself *ce beau matin!*"

On looking up, I saw two small tents within fifty yards of us. They were beautifully placed, in the midst of a thicker portion of the grove than usual, and near a spring of the most exquisitely limpid water I ever beheld. These tents were made of new canvas, and had been fashioned with care and skill. I could see that the one we first approached was carpeted over, and that it had many of the appliances of a comfortable abode. Monsieur Le Compte, who was really a good-looking fellow under forty, put on his most amiable appearance as he got near the canvas door; and he hemmed once or twice, as respectfully as he could, by way of letting his presence be known. In an instant, a maid-servant came out to receive him. The moment I laid eyes on this woman, it struck me her face was familiar, though I could not recall the place, or time, where, or when, we had before met. The occurrence was so singular, that I was still ruminating on it, when I unexpectedly found myself standing in the tent, face to face with Emily Merton and her father!

We recognized each other at a glance, and, to Monsieur Le Compte's amazement, hearty greetings passed between us, as old acquaintances. Old acquaintances, however, we could scarce be called; but, on an uninhabited island in the South Seas, one is glad to meet any face that he has ever met before. Emily looked less blooming than when we had parted, near a twelvemonth before, in London; but she was still pretty and pleasing. Both she and her father were in mourning, and, the mother not appearing, I at once guessed the truth. Mrs. Merton was an invalid when I knew her, though I had not anticipated for her so speedy a death.

I thought Captain Le Compte appeared vexed at my reception. Still, he did not forget his good manners; and he rose, saying he would leave me with my friends to make mutual explanations, while he proceeded to overlook the duty of the day. On taking his leave, I was not pleased to see him approach and kiss Emily's hand. The act was done respectfully, and not entirely without grace; but there were a feeling and manner in it that could not well be mistaken. Emily blushed, as she wished him good morning, and turning to look at me, in spite of a kind of dog-in-the-manger sensation, I could not forbear smiling.

"Never, Mr. Wallingford, never!" Emily said, with emphasis, the instant her admirer was out of hearing. "We are at his mercy, and must keep terms with him; but I can never marry a *foreigner.*"

"That is poor encouragement for Wallingford, my dear," said her father, laughing, "should he happen to take a fancy to you himself."

Emily looked confused, but what, for the circumstances, was better still, she looked concerned.

"I am sure, dear sir," she answered, with a quickness I thought charming, "I am sure Mr. Wallingford will not suppose I meant anything so rude. Then, he is no importunate suitor of mine, like this disagreeable Frenchman, who always seems to me more like a Turkish master, than like one who really respects a woman. Besides——"

"Besides what, Miss Merton?" I ventured to ask, perceiving that she hesitated.

"Besides, Americans are hardly foreigners to us," added Emily, smiling: "for we have even American relatives, you know, father."

"Quite true, my dear, and came near being Americans ourselves. Had my father established himself where he married, as had been his first intention, such

would have been our national character. But Monsieur Le Compte has given us a moment to tell our stories to each other, and I think it will not be a very long moment. Let one of us commence, if we wish the offices done without unpleasant listeners."

Emily urged me to begin, and I did not hesitate. My story was soon told. Major Merton and his daughter understood all about the capture of the ship in the basin, though they were ignorant of the vessel's name. I had only to relate our voyage on the main, and the death of Captain Williams, therefore, to have my whole story told. I made it all the shorter, from an impatience to hear the circumstance which had thrown my friends in their present extraordinary position.

"It seems extraordinary enough, beyond doubt," Major Merton began, the moment I left him an opening by my closing remark, "but it is all very simple when you commence at the right end of the sad story, and follow events in the order in which they occurred.

"When you left us in London, Wallingford, I supposed we were on the point of sailing for the West Indies, but a better appointment soon after offering in the East, my destination was changed to Bombay. It was important that I should reach my port at as early a day as possible, and no Indiaman being ready, I took passage in a licensed running vessel, a ship of no size or force. Nothing occurred until we got within three or four days' sail of our port, when we fell in with *La Pauline*, and were captured. At first, I think Captain Le Compte would have been willing to let me go on parole, but no opportunity offered, and we went with the ship to Manilla. While there the melancholy loss happened, which, no doubt, you have comprehended from our mourning; and I was strongly in hopes of making some arrangements that would still enable me to save my situation. But by this time Monsieur Le Compte had become an open admirer of Emily, and I suppose it is hopeless to expect any liberation, so long as he can invent excuses to frustrate it."

"I trust he does not abuse his power in any way, and annoy Miss Merton with importunities that are unpleasant to her."

Emily rewarded me for the warmth with which I spoke, with a sweet smile and a slight blush.

"Of that I cannot accuse him, in one sense at least," resumed Major Merton. "Monsieur Le Compte does all for us that his sense of delicacy can suggest; and it was not possible for passengers to be more comfortable or retired on board ship, than we were in the *Pauline*. That vessel had a poop, and its cabin was given up entirely to our use. At Manilla I was permitted to go at large on a mere verbal assurance of returning, and in all other particulars we have been treated as well as circumstances would very well allow. Nevertheless, Emily is too young to admire a suitor of forty, too English to admire a foreigner, and too well-born to accept one who is merely a merchant sailor—I mean one who is nothing, and has nothing but what his ship makes him or can give him."

I understood Major Merton's distinction, he saw a difference between the heir of Clawbonny, pursuing his adventures for the love of the sea, and the man who pursued the sea as an adventurer. It was not very delicately made, but it was pretty well, as coming from an European to an American—the latter being assumed *ex gratiâ*, to be a being of an inferior order, morally, politically, physically, socially, and in every other sense but the pecuniary. Thank Heaven! the American dollar is admitted, pennyweight for pennyweight, to a precedency immediately next to that of the metal dollar of Europe. It even goes before the paper *thaler* of Prussia.

"I can readily imagine Miss Merton would look higher than Captain Le Compte, for various reasons," I answered, making a sort of acknowledgment for the distinction in my favor by bowing involuntarily, "and I should hope that gentleman would cease to be importunate as soon as convinced he cannot succeed."

"You do not know a Frenchman, Mr. Wallingford," rejoined Emily. "He is

the hardest creature on earth to persuade into the notion that he is not adorable."

"I can hardly believe that this weakness extends as far as the sailors," said I, laughing. "At all events, you will be released the instant you reach France."

"Sooner, too, I trust, Wallingford," resumed the father. "These Frenchmen can have it their own way out here in the solitude of the Pacific, but once in the Atlantic I shall expect some British cruiser to pick us up, long ere we can reach France."

This was a reasonable expectation, and we conversed about it for some time. I shall not repeat all that passed, but the reader can have no difficulty in understanding that Major Merton and myself communicated to each other every fact that was likely to be of interest to men in our situation. When I thought it prudent to take my leave he walked some distance with me, holding his way to a point on the outer side of the island, where I could get a view of the wreck. Here he left me for the moment, while I proceeded along the beach, ruminating on all that had passed.

The process by which Nature uses her materials to found islands in the midst of oceans like the Pacific, is a curious study. The insect that forms the coral rock must be an industrious little creature, as there is reason to think that some of the reefs that have become known to navigators within the last sixty or seventy years, have since been converted into islands bearing trees, by their labors. Should the work go on, a part of this vast sea will yet be converted into a continent; and who knows but a railroad may yet run across that portion of our globe connecting America with the old world? I see that Captain Beechy, in his voyage, speaks of a wreck that occurred in 1792, on a *reef*, where in 1826 he found an island near three leagues long, bearing tall trees. It would be a curious calculation to ascertain, if one family of insects can make an island three leagues long in thirty-four years, how many families it would take to make the grading of the railroad I have mentioned. Ten years since, I would not have ventured a hint of this nature, for it might have set speculation in motion, and been the instrument of robbing more widows and orphans of their straitened means; but, Heaven be praised! we have at length reached a period in the history of the country, when a man may venture on a speculation in the theory of geography without incurring the risk of giving birth to some wild —if not unprincipled—speculation on dollars and cents.

As I drew near the outer shore of the island, opposite to the wreck, I came unexpectedly on Marble. The poor fellow was seated on a raised projection of coral rock, with his arms folded, and was in so thorough a brown study, that he did not even hear my footsteps in approaching, though I purposely trod heavily, in order to catch his ear. Unwilling to disturb him, I stood gazing at the wreck myself, for some little time, the place affording a much better view of it than any other point from which it had met my eye. The French had made far greater inroads upon their vessel, than the elements. She had struck to leeward of the island, and lay in a spot where, indeed, it might take years to break her entirely up, in that placid sea. Most of her upper works, however, were gone; and I subsequently discovered that her own carpenters had managed to get out even a portion of her floor-timbers, leaving the fabric bound together by those they left. Her lower masts were standing, but even her lower yards had been worked up, in order to make something useful for the schooner. The beach, at no great distance, was still strewed with objects brought from the reef, and which it had not yet been found necessary to use.

At length a movement of mine attracted Marble's attention, and he turned his head toward me. He seemed glad I had joined him, and expressed himself happy, also, that he saw me alone.

"I have been generalizing a little on our condition, Miles," he said, "and look at it which end forward I may, I find it bad enough; almost enough to overcome me. I loved that ship, Mr. Walling-

ford, as much as some folks love their parents—of wife or children, I never had any—and the thought that she has fallen into the hands of a Frenchman is too much for my natur'. Had it been Smudge, I could have borne up against it; but, to haul down one's colors to a wrack, and a bloody French wrack, too, it is superhuman!"

"You must remember all the circumstances, Captain Marble, and you will find consolation. The ship was surprised, as we surprised the Lady of Nantes."

"That's just it—put that on a general principle, now, and where are you? Surprisers mustn't be surprised. Had we set a quarter-watch, sir, it never could have happened; and nothing less than a quarter-watch should have been set in a strange haven. What mattered it, that it was an uninhabited island, and that the ship was land-locked and well moored, and the holding-ground was capital! It is all of no account when you come to look at the affair in the way of duty. Why, old Robbins, with his rivers in the ocean, would never have been caught in this miserable manner."

Then Marble fairly gave in, placed his two hard hands on his face, and I could see tears trickling from beneath them, as if water were squeezed from a stone.

"The chances of the sea, Captain Marble," I said, greatly shocked at such an exhibition, coming from such a quarter—"the chances of the sea are sometimes too much for the best sailors. We should look at this loss, as we look at the losses occasioned by a gale—then there is some hope left, after all."

"I should like to know what—to me, there is no land ahead."

"Surprisers may not only be surprised, but they may carry on their old trade again, and surprise once more, in their turn."

"What do you mean by that, Miles?" said Marble, looking up eagerly, and speaking as quick as lightning; "are you generalizing, or have you any particular project in view?"

"Both, sir. Generalizing, so far as taking the chances of war are concerned, and particularizing as to a certain notion that has come into my head."

"Out with the last Miles—out with it, boy; the Lord made you for something uncommon."

"First, let me know, Captain Marble, whether you have had any further conversation with Monsieur Le Compte? whether he has said any more on the subject of our future proceedings?"

"I just left the grinning rascal—those amiable smiles of his, Miles, are only so many grins thrown into our faces to let us feel his good luck; but, d—n him, if I ever get home, I'll fit out a privateer and be after him, if there's a fast-going schooner to be had in all America for love or money. I think I'd turn pirate to catch the villain!"

Alas!, poor Marble. Little would he, who never got higher than a mate, unless by accident, be likely to persuade your cautious ship-owners to intrust him with a vessel of any sort, to go tilting against windmills afloat in that fashion.

"But why go to America for a schooner, Captain Marble, when the French are polite enough to give us one here, exactly where we are?"

"I begin to understand you, boy. There is a little consolation in the idea, but this Frenchman has already got my commission, and without the document we should be no better than so many pirates."

"I doubt that, sir, even were a ship to act generally, provided she actually sailed with a commission, and lost it by accident. Commissions are all registered, and proof of our character could be found at home."

"Ay, for the *Crisis*, but not for this 'Pretty Polly;'" for so Marble translated *Petite Pauline*. "The commission is only good for the vessel that is named in it."

"I don't know that, Captain Marble. Suppose our ship had been sunk in an action in which we took our enemy; could we not continue our voyage in the prize, and fight anything that came in our way afterward?"

"By George, that does look reasonable. Here was I just threatening to go out as a pirate, yet hesitating about taking my own."

Then Marble fairly gave in, placed his two hard hands on his face, and I could see tears trickling from beneath them as if water were squeezed from a stone.—*Afloat and Ashore.*

"Do not the crews of captured vessels often rise upon their captors, and recapture their own vessels? and were any of them ever called pirates? Besides, nations at war authorize almost every sort of hostile act against their enemies."

"Miles, I have been mistaken—you *are* a good seamen, but natur' meant you for a lawyer! Give me your hand, boy; I see a gleam of hope ahead, and a man can live on less hope than food."

Marble then told me the substance of the conversation he had held with Captain Le Compte. The latter had expressed a sudden and violent impatience to be off. I understood the cause in a moment; he wished to separate Emily from her old acquaintance as soon as possible, intending to put the schooner into the water for us that very afternoon, and to sail himself in the morning. This was a sudden resolution, and the French were moving heaven and earth to carry it into effect. I confess to some little regret at hearing it, for it was pleasant to meet the Mertons in that unexpected manner, and the influence of woman in such a solitude is usually great. I now told Marble of my discovery, and when he had got through with his expressions of wonder, I carried him to the tents, and led him into the presence of his old acquaintances. In consequence of this visit, I enjoyed another half-hour's *tête-à-tête* with Emily, Marble soon taking the major to walk with him beneath the trees.

We were both recalled to a sense of our real situation by the reappearance of Monsieur Le Compte. I cannot say that our conqueror behaved in the least unhandsomely toward us, notwithstanding his evident jealousy. He had the tact to conceal most of his feelings, and owing either to liberality or to art, he assumed an air of generous confidence, that would be much more likely to touch the feelings of the maid he sought than any acts of severity. First asking permission of Miss Merton, he even invited us and himself to dine with the major, and on the whole we had an agreeable entertainment. We had turtle and champagne, and both of a quality that was then out of the reach of all the aldermen of London or New York; begging pardon of the Sir Peters and Sir Johns of Guildhall, for putting them, in any sense, on a level with "the gentleman from the Fourth Ward" or "the gentleman from the Eleventh Ward;" though, if the truth must be told, the last very often eat the best dinners, and drink, out of all comparison, the best wines. Who pays, is a fact buried in the arcana of aldermanic legerdemain. It was late before we left the table, though Monsieur Le Compte quitted us early.

At five o'clock precisely we were summoned to witness the launch. Champagne and claret had brought Marble into good humor, nor was I at all out of spirits myself. Emily put on her hat, and took her parasol, just as she would have done at home, and accepting my arm, she walked to the shipyard, like all the rest of us. Getting her a good place for the sight, I accompanied Marble to take a look at the *Pretty Poll*, which had not as yet attracted as much of our attention as she ought. I had suggested to him the probability of an occasion offering to rise upon the Frenchmen, while their attention was taken up with the schooner; but Monsieur Le Compte warily kept quite half his men in the ship, and this put the attempt out of the question, since the guns of the *Crisis* would have swept any part of the island.

The French mechanics deserved great credit for the skill they had manifested in the construction of *La Petite Pauline*. She was not only a safe and commodious craft for her size, but what was of great importance to us, her lines promised that she would turn out to be a fast sailer. I afterward ascertained that Captain Le Compte had been her draftsman, possessing not only much taste for, but a good deal of practice in, the art. The ship in which the Mertons had taken passage to Bombay had the copper for a teak-built frigate and sloop-of-war in her, and this had been transferred, among other articles, to *La Pauline*, before the prize was burned. Availing himself of this circumstance, Monsieur Le Compte had actually coppered his schooner, and otherwise he

had made her as neat and commodious as possible. I make no doubt he intended to surprise his friends at Marseilles, by showing what clever mariners, wrecked on an island of the Pacific, could do in an emergency. Then, doubtless, he found it pleasant to linger on this island, eating fresh cocoanuts, with delicious turtle, and making love to Emily Merton. Some of the charms of *Pretty Poll* were fairly to be attributed to the charms of the young lady.

The men began to wedge up the moment we were all present, and this portion of the labor was soon completed. Monsieur Le Compte then took his station in the head of the schooner. Making a profound bow to Emily, as if to ask her permission, the signal was given; the spur-shores were knocked away, and the little craft slid off into the water so easily, making so little ripple as she shot a hundred fathoms into the bay, as to give the assurance she would prove a fast vessel. Just as she was waterborne, Le Compte dashed a bottle against the tiller, and shouted at the top of his voice, "*Succès à la belle Emilie.*"

I turned to Emily, and saw by the blush that she understood French, while the manner in which she pouted her pretty plump lip betrayed the humor in which the compliment had been received.

In a few minutes Captain Le Compte landed, and, in a set speech, he gave up the schooner to our possession. We were told not to consider ourselves as prisoners, our captor handsomely admitting that he had gained no laurels by his victory.

"We shall go away, good friend," he concluded, "*mais,* suppose we shall meet, and *nos deux républiques* shall not be at peace, then each must fight for *son pavillon.*"

This was a good concluding sentiment for such a scene. Immediately after, the Mertons and their domestics, of whom there were a man and a woman, embarked. I took leave of them on the beach, and either my observation or my vanity induced me to think Emily got into the boat with reluctance. Many good-wishes were exchanged, and the major called out to us, "We shall meet again, gentlemen—there has been Providence in our previous intercourse. Adieu, until *then.*"

The French were now in a great bustle. Most of the articles they intended to carry away were already on board the ship, and by the time it was dusk they had closed their communication with the land. When Captain Le Compte took his leave of us I could not but thank him for his many civilities. He had certainly dealt generously by us, though I still think his sudden departure, which made us fall heirs to many things we otherwise might not have so done, was owing to his wish to remove Emily Merton, as quickly as possible, from my sight.

At daylight next morning, Neb came to the officers' tents to say the ship was getting her anchors. I was up and dressed in a moment. The distance to the inlet was about a mile, and I reached it just as the *Crisis* was cast. In a few minutes she came sweeping into the narrow pass, under her topsails, and I saw Emily and her father leaning over the hammock-cloths of the quarter-deck. The beautiful girl was so near that I could read the expression of her soft eyes, and I fancied they were filled with gentle concern. The major called out, "God bless you, dear Wallingford"—then the ship swept past, and was soon in the outer bay. Half an hour later, or before I left the spot, she was at sea, under everything that would draw from her trucks down.

CHAPTER XVII.

"I better brook the loss of brittle life,
Than those proud titles thou hast won of me;
They wound my thoughts, worse than thy sword my flesh."
—SHAKESPEARE.

HALF-WAY between this inlet and the shipyard I found Marble, standing with his arms folded, gazing after the receding ship. His countenance was no longer saddened; but it was fierce. He shook his hand menacingly at the French ensign, which was flying at our old gaff, and said—

"Ay, d—n you, flutter away; you quiver and shake now like one of your coxcombs pigeon-winging; but where will you be this day two months? Miles, no man but a bloody Frenchman would cast away a ship there, where this Mister Count has left the bones of his vessel; though *here*, where we came so nigh going, it's a miracle any man could escape. Hadn't we brought the *Crisis* through that opening first, he never would have dared to go out by it."

I confess I saw little about Monsieur Le Compte's management but skill and good seamanship; but nothing is more painful to most men than to admit the merit of those who have obtained an advantage over them. Marble could not forget his own defeat, and the recollection jaundiced his eyes and biased his judgment.

"I see our people are busy already, sir," I remarked, by way of drawing the captain's attention to some other subject. "They have hauled the schooner up to the yard, and seem to be getting along spars for shores."

"Ay, ay—Talcott has his orders, and I expect you will bestir yourself. I shall step the masts myself, and you will get all the rigging ready to be put into its place, the moment it is possible. That Frenchman calculated, he told me to my face, that we might get to sea in a fortnight; I will let him see that a set of Yankees can rig and stow his bloody schooner in three days, and then leave themselves time to play."

Marble was not a man of idle vaunts. He soon had everybody at work, with a system, order, silence, and activity that proved he was master of his profession. Nor was the language which might sound so boastful to foreign ears, altogether without its justification. Forty Americans were a formidable force; and, well directed, I make no doubt they would accomplish far more than the ordinary run of French seamen, as they were governed and managed in the year 1800, and counting them man for man, would have accomplished in double the time. Our crew had now long acted together, and frequently under the most trying circumstances; and they showed their training, if men ever did, on the present occasion. Everybody was busy; and we had the shears up, and both masts stepped, in the course of a few hours. By the time the mainmast was in, I had the foremast rigged, the jib-boom in its place, the spritsail yard crossed—everything carried a spar under its bowsprit then—and the lower yard up. It is true, the French had got everything ready for us; and when we turned the hands to, after dinner, we actually began to strike in cargo, water, provisions, and such other things as it was intended to carry away. At dusk, when we knocked off work, the *Emily* looked like a sea-going craft, and there was every prospect of our having her ready for sea by the following evening. But, the duty had been carried on in silence. Napoleon said there had been more noise made in the little schooner which carried him from l'Orient to Basque Roads, than was made on board the line-of-battle ship that conveyed him to St. Helena, during the whole passage. Since that memorable day, the French have learned to be silent on board ship, and the fruits remain to be seen.

That night, Marble and myself consulted together on the aspect of things—or, as he expressed it, "we generalized over our prospects." Monsieur Le Compte had done one thing which duty required of him. He did not leave us a kernel of the gunpowder belonging to either ship; nor could we find a boarding-pike, cutlass, or weapon of any sort, except the officers' pistols. We had a canister of powder, and a sufficiency of bullets for the last, which had been left us, out of an *esprit de corps*, or the feeling of an officer, which told him we might possibly need these means to keep our own crew in order. Such was not the fact, however, with the particular people we happened to have; a more orderly and reasonable set of men never sailing together. But Monsieur Le Compte knew it was his duty to put it out of their power to trouble us, so far as it lay in his; but, at the same time, while he left us the means of safety,

he provided against our doing any further injury to his own countrymen. In this he had pretty effectually succeeded, so far as armament was concerned.

The next morning I was up with the appearance of the dawn, and, having suffered much from the heat of the preceding day, I walked to a suitable spot, threw off my clothes, and plunged into the basin. The water was transparent almost as air; and I happened to select a place where the coral grew within a few yards of the surface. As I dove, my eye fell on a considerable cluster of large oysters that were collected on the rock, and, reaching them, I succeeded in bringing up half a dozen that clung to each other. These dives I repeated, during the next quarter of an hour, until I had all the oysters, sixty or eighty in number, safe on the shore. That they were the pearl oysters, I knew immediately; and beckoning to Neb, the fellow soon had them snug in a basket, and put away in a place of security. The circumstance was mentioned to Marble, who, finding no more heavy drags to be made, ordered the Sandwich Islanders to take a boat and pass a few hours in their reguler occupation, on account of the owners—if, indeed, the last had any further claim on our services. These men met with tolerable success, though, relatively, nothing equal to mine. What, just then, was of far more importance, they made a discovery of an arm-chest lying on the bottom of the basin, at the anchorage of the *Crisis*, and which had doubtless been sunk there by the French. We had all *La Pauline's* boats but the captain's gig. I went in one of them with a gang of hands, and, the divers securing a rope to the handles of the chest, we soon got it in. It turned out to be one of the arm-chests of the *Crisis*, which the French had found in their way and thrown overboard, evidently preferring to use weapons to which they were accustomed. They had done better by carrying the chest out to sea, and disposing of it in fifty or a hundred fathoms of water.

The prize was turned over to the gunner, who reported that it was the chest in which we kept our cutlasses and pistols, of both of which there was a sufficient supply to give every man one of each. There were also several horns of powder, and a bag of bullets; but the first was ruined by the water. As for the arms, they were rubbed dry, oiled, and put away again in the chest, after the last had stood a whole day in the hot sun open. Thus, through the agency of men brought for a very different purpose, we were put in possession of the means of achieving the exploit, which might now be said to form the great object of our lives.

That day we got everything on board the schooner that it was thought desirable to take with us. We left much behind that was valuable, it is true, especially the copper; but Marble wisely determined that it was inexpedient to put the vessel deeper than good ballast-trim, lest it should hurt her sailing. We had got her fairly to her bearings, and this was believed to be as low as was expedient. It is true, a great deal remained to be stowed; the deck being littered, and the hold, the ground tier excepted, in great confusion. But our bread, water, beef, pork, and other eatables, were all there, and in abundance; and, though not to be had for the asking, they were still to be had. The sails were bent, and the only anchor, *La Pauline's* stream with her two largest kedges, was on our bows. While in this condition, Marble gave the unexpected order for all hands to come on board, and for the shore-fasts to be cast off.

Of course, there was no dissenting to so positive a command. We had signed new shipping articles for the schooner, extending the engagements made when we entered on board the *Crisis* to this new vessel, or any other she might capture. The wind was a steady trade, and when we showed our mainsail and jib to it, the little craft glided athwart the basin like a duck. Shooting through the pass, Marble tacked her twice, as soon as he had an offing; and everybody was delighted with the quickness with which she was worked. There was barely light enough to enable us to find our way

through the opening in the reef; and just thirty-eight hours after the *Crisis* sailed, we were on her track. We had only conjecture to guide us as to the ship's course, with the exception of the main fact of her having sailed for the west coast of South America; but we had not failed to notice that she disappeared in the northeast trades, on a bowline. We put the schooner as near as possible on the same course, making a proper allowance for the difference in the rig of the two vessels.

The distance run that night satisfied us all that Monsieur Le Compte was a good draftsman. The schooner ran one hundred and six miles in twelve hours, against a very respectable sea, which was at least ten or fifteen more than the *Crisis* could have done under the same circumstances. It is true, that what was close-hauled for her, was not close-hauled for us; and, in this respect, we had the advantage of her. Marble was so well pleased with our night's work, that when he came on deck next morning, the first thing he did was to order a bottle of rum to be brought him, and then all hands were to be called. As soon as the people were up, he went forward, got into the head, and commanded everybody to muster on the forecastle. Marble now made a speech.

"We have had some good, and some bad luck this v'y'ge, men," he said; "and when we generalize on the subject, it will be found that good luck has usually followed the bad luck. Now the savages, with that blackguard Smudge, knocked poor Captain Williams in the head, and threw him overboard, and got the ship from us; then came the good luck of getting her back again. After this, the French did us that unhandsome thing; now here comes the good luck of their leaving us a craft that will overhaul the ship, when I needn't tell *you* what will come of it." Here all hands, as in duty bound, gave three cheers. "Now I neither sail nor fight in a craft that carries a French name. Captain Count christened the schooner the—Mr. Wallingford, will you tell her exact name?"

"*La Belle Emilie*," said I, "or the Beautiful Emily."

"None of your belles for me, nor your Beautiful Emilys either," cried Marble, smashing the bottle over the schooner's nose; "so here goes three cheers again for the *Pretty Poll*, which was the name the craft was born to, and the name she shall bear, as long as Moses Marble sails her."

From that moment the schooner was known by the name of the *Pretty Poll*. I met with portions of our crew years afterward, and they always spoke of her by this appellation; sometimes familiarly terming her the *Poll* or the *Polly*."

All the first day out, we were busy in making ourselves comfortable, and in getting the *Polly's* trim. We succeeded so well in this last, that, according to our calculations, we made a knot an hour more than the *Crisis* could have done under the same circumstances, fast as the ship was known to be. As the *Crisis* had about thirty-eight hours the start of us, and ran, on an average, about seven knots the hour for all that time, it would require about ten days to overtake her. Of course this could only happen, according to our own calculations, when we were from eighteen hundred to two thousand miles from the island. For my own part, I sincerely hoped it would not occur at all, at sea; feeling satisfied our only chances of success depended on surprise. By following the vessel into some port it might be possible to succeed; but for an unarmed schooner to attack a ship like the *Crisis*, with even a large crew on board, it seemed rashness to think of it. Marble, however, would not listen to my remonstrances. He insisted we had more than powder enough to load all our pistols half a dozen times each, and, laying the ship plump aboard, the pistols would do the rest. I was silenced, quite as a matter of course, if not convinced.

The fifth day out, Neb came to me, saying—"Master Miles, somet'ing must be done wid 'em 'ere 'ysters! Dey smell, onaccountable; and the people swear dey will t'row 'm overboard, if I don't eat 'em. I not hungry enough for *dat*, sir."

These were the pearl oysters, already mentioned, which had been hastening to dissolution and decomposition, by the heat of the hold. As the captain was as much concerned in this portion of the cargo as I was myself, I communicated the state of things to him, and he ordered the bags and barrels on deck forthwith. It was well something was done, or I doubt not a disease would have been the consequence. As decomposition was the usual process by which to come at the treasures of these animals, however, everything was exactly in the state we wished.

An uninterested observer would have laughed at seeing the employment of the quarter-deck for the next four hours. Marble, and the two mates, attacked a barrel belonging to the captain, while Neb and I had our own share to ourselves. It was a trying occupation, the odor far exceeding in strength that of the Spice Islands. We stood it, however—for what will not man endure for the sake of riches? Marble foresaw the difficulties and had at once announced to the mates that they then would "open on shares." This had a solacing influence, and amid much mirth and sundry grimaces the work went on with tolerable rapidity. I observed, however, that Talcott threw one or two subjects, that doubtless were tougher than common, overboard, after very superficial examinations.

The first seven oysters I examined contained nothing but seed pearl, and not many of these. Neb opened, and I examined; and the latter occupation was so little to my taste, that I was just on the point of ordering the whole lot thrown overboard, when Neb handed me another. This oyster contained nine beautiful pearls, of very uniform dimensions, and each about as large as a good-sized pea. I dropped them into a bowl of fresh water, whence they came out sweet, pearly, and lustrous. They were of the sort known as the "white water," which is the kind most prized among Christian nations, doubtless on account of their harmonizing so well with the skins of their women. No sooner was my luck known, than it brought all the other "pearl fishermen" around me; Marble, with his nostrils plugged with oakum and a quid of tobacco in his mouth that was as large as a small potato.

"By George, Miles, that looks like business," the captain exclaimed, going back to his work, with renovated zeal, "though it is a calling fit only for hogs and scavengers! Did I embark in it largely, I would keep as many clerks as a bank. What do you suppose, now, these nine caps may be worth?"

"Some fifty dollars, or thereabouts—you see, sir, they are quite large—much larger than it is usual to see our women wear."

The ninth of my oysters produced eleven pearls, and all about the size and quality of the first. In a few minutes I had seventy-three just such pearls, beside a quantity of seed pearl. Then followed a succession of barren shells, a dozen not giving a pearl. The three that succeeded them gave thirty-one more; and another yielded four pearls, each of which was as large as a small cherry. After that I got one that was almost as large as a common hickory-nut, and six more of the size of the cherry-sized pearls. In addition to these, I got, in all, one hundred and eighty-seven of the size of peas, besides a large handful of the seed pearl. I afterward ascertained that the pearls I had thus obtained were worth, in the market, about eighteen hundred dollars; as they were far more remarkable for their beauty than for their size.

Nothwithstanding the oakum plugs, and the tobacco, and the great quantity of shells his divers had found, for they had brought up something like two hundred and fifty oysters in the course of the day, the party of the captain found in all but thirty-six pearls, the seed excepted: though they obtained some beautiful specimens among the shells. From that moment Marble discontinued the trade, and I never heard him say anything more on the subject of pursuing it. My own beauties were put carefully away in reserve for the time when I might delight the eyes of certain of my female friends with them. I never intended to sell one, but they were very precious to me on

other accounts. As for the crew, glad enough were they to be rid of such uncomfortable shipmates. As I gazed on the spotless and lustrous pearls, and compared them with the revolting tenement from which they had just been redeemed, I likened them to the souls of the just escaping from their tenements of clay, to enjoy hereafter an endless existence of purity.

In the meantime, the *Pretty Poll* continued to find her way along miles and miles of the deserted track across the Pacific. Marble had once belonged to a Baltimore clipper, and he sailed our craft probably much better than she would have been sailed by Monsieur Le Compte, though that officer, as I afterward learned, had distinguished himself in command of a lugger-privateer in the British Channel. Our progress was generally from a hundred and fifty to two hundred and twenty miles in twenty-four hours; and so it continued to be for the first ten days, or the period, when, according to our own calculations, we ought to be near the *Crisis*, had that vessel steered a course resembling our own. For my own part, I neither wished nor expected to see the ship until we reached the coast of South America, when we might ascertain her position by communicating with the shore. As for the *guarda-costas*, I knew we could easily elude them, and there might be a small chance of regaining the vessel, something like the way in which we had lost her. But Marble's impatience, and the keenness with which he felt our disgrace, would not make terms even with the elements; and I do believe he would have run alongside of the *Crisis* in a gale of wind, could he have come up with her. The chance of our having sailed so far, however, on a line so nearly resembling that of the chase as to bring us together, was so very small that few of us thought it worth our consideration.

On the morning of the eleventh day, the lookout we had kept on the fore-topsail-yard, sung out "Sail ho!" Marble and myself were soon on the yard, there being nothing visible from the deck. The upper sails, topgallant-sails, and royals of the ship were visible on our weather quarter, distant from fifteen to twenty miles. As we were now in the track of whalers, of which there were a good many in that part of the Pacific, I thought it was probable this was one; but Marble laughed at the notion, asking if I had ever heard of a whaler's carrying royals on her cruising ground. He affirmed it was the *Crisis*, heading the same way we were ourselves, and which had only got to windward of us by keeping a better luff. We had calculated too much on the schooner's weatherly qualities, and had allowed her to fall off more than was necessary in the night-watches.

The *Pretty Poll* was now jammed up on a wind, in the hope of closing with the chase in the course of the night. But the wind had been growing lighter and lighter for some hours, and by noon, though we had neared the chase so much as to be able to see her from deck, there was every prospect of its falling calm; after which, in the trades, it would be surprising if we did not get a blow. To make the most of our time, Marble determined to tack, when we had just got the chase a point off our weather-bow. An hour after tacking, an object was seen adrift on the ocean, and keeping away a little to close with it, it was ascertained to be a whale-boat adrift. The boat was American-built, had a breaker of water, the oars and all the usual fittings in it; and the painter being loose, it had probably been lost, when towing in the night, in consequence of having been fastened by *three* half-hitches.

The moment Marble ascertained the condition of this boat, he conceived his plan of operations. The four Sandwich Islanders had been in whalers, and he ordered them into the boat, put in some rum and some food, gave me his orders, got in himself, and pulled ahead, going off at five knots the hour, leaving the schooner to follow at the rate of two. This was about an hour before sunset, and by the time it was dark the boat had become a mere speck on the water, nearly half-way between us and the ship, which was now some fifteen miles distant, heading always in the same direction.

My orders had been very simple. They were, to stand on the same course until I saw a light from the boat, and then tack so as to run on a parallel line with the ship. The signal was made by Marble about nine o'clock. It was immediately answered from the schooner. The light on the boat was concealed from the ship, and our own was shown only for a few seconds, the disappearance of Mr. Marble's telling us in that brief space that our answer was noted. I tacked immediately, and taking in the foresail, stood on the direct course. We had all foreseen a change in the weather, and probably a thunder-squall. So far from its giving Marble any uneasiness he anticipated the blow with pleasure, as he intended to lay the *Crisis* aboard in its height. He fancied that success would then be the most certain. His whole concern was at not being able to find the ship in the darkness, and it was to obviate this difficulty that he undertook to pilot us up to her in the manner I have just mentioned.

After getting round, a sharp lookout was kept for the light. We caught another view of it directly on our weather-beam. From this we inferred that the ship had more wind than we felt, inasmuch as she had materially altered her position, while we had not moved a mile since we tacked. This was on the supposition that Marble would endeavor to follow the movements of the ship. At ten the tempest broke upon us with tropical violence, and with a suddenness that took everybody by surprise. A squall had been expected, but no one anticipated its approach for several hours, and we had all looked for the return of the whale-boat ere that moment should come. But come it did when least expected, the first puff throwing our little schooner down in a way to convince us the elements were in earnest. In fifteen minutes after the first blast was felt I had the schooner under a reefed foresail, and with that short canvas there were instants, as she struggled up to the summit of the waves, that it seemed as if she were about to fly out of the water. My great concern, however, was for the boat, of which nothing could now be seen. The orders left by Marble anticipated no such occurrence as this tempest, and the concert between us was interrupted. It was naturally inferred among us, in the schooner, that the boat would endeavor to close as soon as the danger was foreseen; and as this would probably be done by running on a converging line, all our efforts were directed to keeping the schooner astern of the other party, in order that they might first reach the point of junction. In this manner there *was* a chance of Marble's finding the schooner, while there was little of our finding the boat. It is true we carried several lights, but as soon as it began to rain even a bonfire would not have been seen at a hundred yards. The water poured down upon us, as if it fell from spouts, occasionally ceasing and then returning in streams.

I had then never passed so miserable a night; even that in which Smudge and his fellows murdered Captain Williams and seized the ship being happiness in comparison. I loved Marble. Hardy, loose in some respects, and unnurtured as he was in others, the man had been steadily my friend. He was a capital seaman, a sort of an instinctive navigator, true as a needle to the flag, and as brave as a lion. Then I knew he was in his present strait on account of mortified feeling, and the rigid notions he entertained of his duty to his owners. I think I do myself no more than justice, when I say that I would gladly have exchanged places with him any time that night.

We held a consultation on the quarter-deck, and it was determined that our only chance of picking up the boat was by remaining as nearly as possible at the place where her crew must have last seen the schooner. Marble had a right to expect this, and we did all that lay in our power to effect the object, wearing often, and gaining on our tacks what we lost in coming round. In this manner we passed a painful and most uncomfortable night: the winds howling about us a sort of requiem for the dead, while we hardly knew when we were wallowing in the seas or not, there being so much water that came

down from the clouds as nearly to drown us on deck.

At last the light returned, and soon after the tempest broke, appearing to have expended its fury. An hour after the sun had risen, we got the trade-wind again, the sea became regular once more, and the schooner was under all her canvas. Of course, every one of us officers was aloft, some forward, some aft, to look out for the boat; but we did not see her again. What was still more extraordinary, nothing could be seen of the ship! We kept all that day cruising around the place, expecting to find at least the boat; but without success.

My situation was now altogether novel to me. I had left home rather more than a twelvemonth before, the third officer of the *Crisis*. From this station I had risen regularly to be her first officer; and now, by a dire catastrophe, I found myself in the Pacific, solely charged with the fortunes of my owners, and those of some forty human beings. And this, too, before I was twenty years old.

Marble's scheme of attacking the ship had always seemed to me to be wild and impracticable. This was while it was *his* project, not my own. I still entertained the same opinion, as regards the assault at sea; but I had, from the first, regarded an attempt on the coast as a thing much more likely to succeed. Then Emily and her father, and the honor of the flag, and the credit I might personally gain, had their influence; and at sunset, all hope of finding the boat being gone, I ordered sail made on our course.

The loss of the whale-boat occurred when we were about two thousand miles from the western coast of South America. We had a long road before us, consequently; and, as I had doubted whether the ship we had seen was the *Crisis*, it was necessary to be in motion, if anything was to be effected with our old enemies. The reader may feel some desire to know in what manner my succession to the command was received by the people. No man could have been more implicitly obeyed. I was now six feet and an inch in height, of a powerful and active frame, a good seaman, and had the habit of command, through a twelvemonth's experience. The crew knew me, having seen me tried, from the weather-earings down; and it is very likely I possessed more of their confidence than I deserved. At all events, I was as implicitly obeyed as if I had sailed from New York at their head. Everybody regretted Marble; more, I think, than we regretted Captain Williams, though it must have been on account of the manner we saw him disappear, as it might be, from before our eyes; since, of the two, I think, the last was the most estimable man. Nevertheless, Marble had his strong points, and they were points likely to take with seamen; and they had particularly taken with us. As for the four Sandwich Islanders, I do not know that they occupied any of our minds at all. We had been accustomed to regard them as strange beings, who came from that ocean to which they had been thus suddenly returned.

Fifteen days after the loss of the whale-boat we made the peaks of the Andes, a very few degrees to the southward of the equator. From some casual remarks made by the French, and which I had overheard, I had been led to believe they intended to run for Guayaquil, or its vicinity; and I aimed at reaching the coast near the same point. We had been in, ourselves, at several bays and roadsteads, moreover, on this part of the shore, on our way north; and I felt at home among them. We had acquaintances, too, who could not fail to be of use to us; and everything conspired to render this an advantageous landfall.

On the evening of the twenty-ninth day after quitting the island, we took the schooner into an open roadstead, where we had carried on some extensive traffic in the ship, about eight months before, and where I fancied we should still be recognized. As was expected, we had scarcely anchored, before a Don Pedro Something, a fellow with a surprising string of names, came off to us in a boat, in order to ascertain who we were, and what we wanted. Perhaps it would be better to say, that we had that *he* wanted.

I knew the man at a glance, having delivered to him, myself, three boat-loads of goods, and received a small bag of doubloons in exchange. A very few words, half English, half Spanish, served to renew our acquaintance; and I gave our old friend to understand that I was in search of the ship, from which I had been separated on some extra duty.

After beating the bush to discover all he could, the Don Pedro gave me to understand that *a* ship had gone in behind an island that was only ten miles to the southward of us, that very afternoon; that he had seen her himself, and had supposed she might be his old friend the *Crisis*, until he saw the French ensign at her gaff. This was sufficient, and I made inquiries for a pilot. A man qualified to carry us to the place was found in one of the boatmen. As I feared the news of the arrival of the schooner might be carried to the ship, much as we had got our intelligence, no time was lost, but we were under way by ten o'clock. At midnight we entered the pass between the main and the island; there I got into a boat, and pulled ahead, in order to reconnoitre. I found the ship lying close under a high bluff, which made a capital lee, and with every sign about her of tranquillity. Still, I knew a vessel that was always in danger from the *guarda-costas*, and which relied on the celerity of its movements for its safety, would have a vigilant lookout. Accordingly, I took a cool and careful examination of the ship's position, landing and ascending the bluff, in order to do this at my ease. About two o'clock in the morning, I returned to the schooner.

When I put my foot on the *Polly's* deck again, she was quite near the point, or bluff, having set down toward it during my absence. All hands were on deck, armed, and in readiness. Expectation had got to be so keen that we had a little difficulty in keeping the men from cheering; but silence was preserved, and I communicated the result of my observations in as few words as possible. The orders were then given, and the schooner was brought under short sail, for the attack. We were so near our side of the bluff, while the ship lay so near the other, that my principal apprehension was of falling to leeward, which might give the French time to muster, and re-collect themselves. The canvas, accordingly, was reduced to the foresail, though the jib, mainsail, and topsail were all loose, in readiness to be set, if wanted. The plan was to run the ship aboard, on her starboard bow, or offside, as respected the island; and to do this with as little of a shock as possible.

When everything was ready, I went aft, stood by the man at the helm, and ordered him to bear up. Neb placed himself just behind me. I knew it was useless to interfere, and let the fellow do as he pleased. The pilot had told me the water was deep, up to the rocks of the bluff; and we hugged the land as close as possible, in rounding the point. At the next moment the ship was in sight, distant less than a hundred fathoms. I saw we had good way, and, three minutes later, I ordered the foresail brailed. At the same instant I walked forward. So near were we, that the flapping of the canvas was heard in the ship, and we got a hail. A mystified answer followed, and then crash came our bows along those of the *Crisis*. "Hurrah! for the old craft!" shouted our men, and aboard we tumbled in a body. Our charge was like the plunge of a pack of hounds as they leap through a hedge.

The scene that followed was one of wild tumult. Some twenty pistols were fired, and a good many hard blows were struck: but the surprise secured us the victory. In less than three minutes, Talcott came to report to me that our lads had complete possession of the deck, and that the French asked for quarter. At first, the enemy supposed they had been seized by a *guarda-costa*, for the impression had been general among them that we intended to quit the island for Canton. Great was the astonishment among them when the truth came to be known. I heard a great many "*sacr-r-r-es!*" and certain other maledictions in low French, that it is scarcely worth while to repeat.

Harris, one of the Philadelphians, and the man who had got us into the difficulty by falling asleep on his watch, was killed:

nd no less than nine of our men, myself mong the number, were hurt in this brisk usiness. All the wounds, however, were light; only three of the injuries taking he parties off duty. As for the poor fel- ow who fell, he owed his death to risking oo much in order to recover the ground e had lost.

The French fared much worse than our- elves. Of those killed outright, and hose who died before morning, there ere no less than sixteen; our fellows aving fired a volley into a group that as rushing on deck, besides using their utlasses with great severity for the first inute or two. This was on the principle hat the first blow was half the battle. here were few wounded; most of those ho fell being cut or thrust at by several t the same time—a species of attack that eft little chance for escape. Poor Mon- ieur Le Compte was found stone-dead at he cabin-doors, having been shot in the orehead, just as he put his foot on the eck. I heard his voice once in the fray, nd feared it boded no good; but the ilence which succeeded was probably aused by his just then receiving the fatal ullet. He was in his shirt.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1st *Witch.*—Hail!
2d *Witch.*—Hail!
3d *Witch.*—Hail!
1st *Witch.*—Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.
2d *Witch.*—Not so happy, yet much happier."
—MACBETH.

I HOPE I shall be believed in saying, if arble had been with us when we retook e ship, I should have been perfectly appy. He was not, however, and regret as left to mingle in our triumph. I had hasty interview with Major Merton, at night, and communicated all that as necessary to quiet the apprehensions his daughter. Emily was in her state- om, and had been alarmed, as a matter course; but when she learned that all as over, and had terminated success- lly, her fears yielded to reason. Of ourse, both she and her father felt it to be a great relief that they were no longer prisoners.

We were no sooner fairly in command of our old ship again than I had all hands called to get the anchor. We hove up, and passed out to sea without delay, it being necessary to cover our movements with as much mystery as possible, in order to prevent certain awkward de- mands from the Spanish government, on the subject of violation of neutral terri- tory. A hint from Major Merton put me on my guard as respected this point, and I determined to disappear as suddenly as we had arrived, in order to throw ob- stacles in the way of being traced. By daylight, therefore, both the ship and schooner were four leagues from the land, and on the "great highway of nations;" a road, it may be said in passing, that was then greatly infested by footpads and other robbers.

Just as the sun rose we buried the dead. This was done decently, and with the us- ual ceremony, the triumph of victory giving place to the sad reflections that are so apt to succeed to the excited feel- ing of most of our struggles. I saw poor Le Compte disappear from sight with re- gret, and remembered his recent hopes, his generous treatment, his admiration of Emily, and all that he had so lately thought and felt, as a warning of the fragile nature of life, and that which life can bestow. Thus terminated an ac- quaintance of a month; but a month that had been pregnant with incidents of great importance to myself.

It now became necessary to decide on our future course. I had the ship, just as the French got her from us, with the ad- dition of those portions of their own car- go with which they had intended to trade on the coast of South America. These consisted of silks and various fancy arti- cles, with a little wine, and would be near- ly as valuable at home as they were in Spanish America. I was strongly averse to smuggling, and the ship having al- ready followed out her original instruc- tions on this point, I saw no necessity for pursuing the ungrateful trade any further. Could I return to the island, and get the

articles of value left on it by the French, such as the copper they had not used, and divers bales received from the Bombay ship, which had been abandoned by us all under a tent, more profit would accrue to my owners than by any illicit commerce we could now possibly carry into effect on the coast.

While Talcott, and the new chief mate, and myself, were discussing these points, the cry of "Sail ho!" was heard. A large ship had suddenly hove up out of the morning's mist, within a mile of us, and I thought at first we had got under the guns of a Spanish man-of-war. A second look at her, however, satisfied us all that, though heavy and armed, she was merely one of those clumsy traders that sailed periodically from the colonies to Spain. We went to quarters, and cleared ship, but made no effort to avoid the stranger. The Spaniards, of the two, were the most uneasy, I believe, their country being then at war with England; but we spoke each other without coming to blows. As soon as the strangers saw the American ensign, they expressed a wish to communicate with us; and, unwilling to let them come on board us, I volunteered a visit to the Spanish captain. He received me with formal politeness, and, after some preliminary discourse, he put into my hands some American newspapers, which contained a copy of the treaty of peace between the United States and France. On looking over the articles of this new compact, I found that had our recapture of the *Crisis* been delayed to that very day, at noon, it would have been illegal. The two nations, in fact, were at peace when the French seized the ship, but the customary provisions as to captures in distant seas just brought us within the saving clauses. Such is war and its concomitants.

In the course of half an hour's conversation, I discovered that the Spaniard intended to touch at Valparaiso, and called, in order to get men, his own having suffered, up the coast, with the small-pox. His ship was large, carried a considerable armament, and he should not deem her safe from the smaller English cruisers, unless he doubled the cape much stronger handed than he then was. I caught at the idea, and inquired what he thought of Frenchmen? They would answer his purpose, for France and Spain had a common enemy, and nothing would be easier than to send the French from Cadiz to Marseilles. A bargain was consequently struck on the spot.

When I got back on board the *Crisis*, I had all the prisoners mustered on deck. They were made acquainted with the offers of the Spanish captain, with the fact that peace now existed between our respective countries, and with the chance that presented itself, so opportunely, for them to return home. The proposition was cheerfully accepted, anything being better than captivity. Before parting, I endeavored to impress on the French the necessity of prudence on the subject of our recapturing the *Crisis* in Spanish waters, inasmuch as the circumstance might induce an inquiry as to what took the ship there; it being well understood that the mines were the punishment of those who were taken in the contraband trade in that quarter of the world. The French promised fairly. Whether they kept their words I never knew, but, if they did not, no consequences ever followed from their revelations. In such a case, indeed, the Spanish government would be very apt to consider the question one that touched the interests of smugglers alike, and to feel great indifference between the parties. At all events, no complaints were ever made to the American government; or, if made, they never reached my ears, or those of my owners. It is most probable nothing was ever said on the subject.

About noon we had got rid of our prisoners. They were allowed to take away with them all their own effects, and as usually happens in such cases, I make little doubt some that belonged to other persons. The ships then made sail, each on her own course; the Spaniard running down the coast, while we spread our studding-sails for the island. As soon as this was done, I felt relieved from a great burden, and had leisure to think of other matters. I ought to mention, however,

that I put the second mate, or him who had become chief mate by my own advancement, in command of the *Pretty Poll* giving him two experienced seamen as his own mates and six men to sail her. This made Talcott the *Crisis's* first officer, and glad was I to see him in a station a little suited to his attainments.

That evening, just as the sun was setting, I saw Emily again, for the first time since she had stood leaning over the rail as the *Crisis* shot through the inlet of the lagoon. The poor girl was pale, and it was evident, while she could not but rejoice at her liberation, and her release from the solicitations of the unfortunate Le Compte, that his death had cast a shade of sadness over her pretty features. It could not well be otherwise, the female breast ever entertaining its sympathies for those who submit to the influence of its owner's charms. Then, poor Le Compte had some excellent qualities, and he treated Emily, as she admitted to me herself, with the profoundest respect and delicacy. His admiration could scarce be an offense in her eyes, however disagreeable it proved, in certain points of view.

Our meeting partook of the character of our situation, being a mixture of melancholy and happiness. I rejoiced in our success, while I regretted Marble, and even our late enemies, while the major and his daughter could not but remember all the gloomy particulars of their late, and, indeed, of their present position.

"We seem to be kept like Mahomet's coffin, sir," Emily observed, as she looked affectionately at her father, "suspended between heaven and earth—the Indies and America—not knowing on which we are to alight. The Pacific is our air, and we are likely to breathe it, to our heart's content."

"True, love—your comparison is not an unhappy one. But, Wallingford, what has become of Captain Marble in these stirring times? You have not left him, Sancho-Panza-like, to govern Barritaria, while you have come to recover his ship?"

I told my passengers of the manner in which our old friend had disappeared, and inquired if anything had been seen of the whale-boat, or the schooner, on the night of the tropical tempest.

"Nothing," answered the major. "So far from expecting to lay eyes on the *Beautiful Emily*, again, we supposed you would be off for Canton by the end of the fortnight that succeeded our own departure. At least, that was poor Le Compte's version of the matter. I am certain, however, that no sail was seen from this ship, during the whole passage; nor had we any storm like that you have described. More beautiful weather I never met at sea."

Upon this, I sent for the log-book, and ascertained, by day and date, that the *Crisis* was not within fifty leagues of the spot where we encountered the thunder-squall. Of course the ship we saw was a stranger; most probably a whaler. This destroyed any little hope that was left concerning Marble's fate.

But it is time that I should mention a *galanterie* of poor Le Compte's. He was well provided with shipwrights—better, indeed, than with seamen—as was apparent by the readiness with which he had constructed the schooner. During the passage from Marble Land, he had set these workmen about building a poop on the *Crisis's* quarter-deck, and I found the work completed. There was a very pretty airy cabin, with two staterooms communicating with light quarter-galleries, and everything that is customary with such accommodations. Furniture had been made, with French dexterity and taste, and the paint was just dry to receive it. Emily and her father were to take possession of these new accommodations the very day succeeding that in which the ship fell again into our hands. This alteration is not such as I would have made as a seaman, and I wonder Monsieur Le Compte, who had the gauntlet to run through the most formidable navy in the world, should have ventured on it, since it sensibly affected the ship's sailing on a wind. But, now it was peace, I cared little about it, and determined to let it remain, so long, at least, as Miss Merton continued on board.

That very night, therefore, the major

occupied one of the staterooms, and his daughter the other. Imitating poor Le Compte's gallantry, I gave them a separate table, though I took quite half my meals with them, by invitation. Emily did not absolutely dress my wound, a flesh injury in the shoulder, that office falling to her father's share, who had seen a good deal of service, and was familiar with the general treatment of hurts of this nature; but she could, and did, show many of those gentle and seductive attentions, that the tenderness of her sex can alone bestow with full effect on man. In a fortnight my hurt was cured, though Emily had specifics to recommend and advice to bestow, until we were both ashamed to allude to the subject any longer.

As for the passage, it was just such a one as might be expected to occur, in the trades of the Pacific. The ship was under studding-sails nearly the whole time, making, day in and day out, from a hundred and twenty to two hundred miles in the twenty-four hours. The mates kept the watches, and I had little to do, but to sit and chat with the major and his daughter in the cool, airy cabin that Le Compte had provided for us; listen to Emily's piano, which had been transferred from the prize, and subsequently saved from the wreck; or read aloud out of some of the two or three hundred beautifully-bound and sweetly-scented volumes that composed her library. In that day, people read Pope and Young, and Milton, and Shakespeare, and that sort of writers; a little relieved by Mrs. Radcliffe, and Miss Burney, and Monk Lewis, perhaps. As for Fielding and Smollett, they were well enough in their place, which was not a young lady's library, however. There were still more useful books, and I believe I read everything in the ship, before the voyage ended. The leisure of a sea life, in a tranquil, well-ordered vessel, admits of much study; and books ought to be a leading object in the fitting out that portion of a vessel's equipment which relates chiefly to the welfare of her officers and crew.

Time passed pleasantly enough with a young fellow who had certainly some reason to be satisfied with his own success thus far in life, and who could relieve the tedium of ship's duty in such society. I cannot say I was in love, though I often thought of Emily when she was not before my eyes, and actually dreamed of her three times in the first fortnight after the recapture of the ship. What was a little remarkable, as I conceive, I often found myself drawing comparisons between her and Lucy, though I hardly knew why, myself. The result was very much after this sort—Emily had vastly the advantage in all that related to art, instruction, training—I am wrong, Mr. Hardinge had given his daughter a store of precise, useful knowledge, that Emily did not possess; and then I could not but see that Lucy's tact in moral feeling was much of the highest order of the two. But in purely conventional attainments, in most that relates to the world, its usages, its *finesse* of feeling and manner, I could see that Emily was the superior. Had I known more myself, I could have seen that both were provincial—for England in 1801, was but a province as to mere manners, though on a larger scale than America is even now—and that either would have been remarked for peculiarities in the more sophisticated circles of the continent of Europe. I dare say half my own countrymen would have preferred Lucy's nature to the more artificial manner of Emily; but it will not do to say that even female deportment, however delicate and feminine Nature may have made it, cannot be improved by certain general rules for the government of that which is even purely conventional. On the whole, I wished that Lucy had a little of Emily's art, and Emily a good deal more of Lucy's nature. I suppose the perfection in this sort of thing is to possess an art so admirable that it shall appear to be nature in all things immaterial, while it leaves the latter strictly in the ascendant in all that is material.

In person, I sometimes fancied Emily was the superior, and sometimes, when memory carried me back to certain scenes that had occurred during my last visit to

Clawbonny, that it was Lucy. In complexion, and perhaps in eyes, the English girl beat her rival, possibly, also, in the teeth—though Lucy's were even and white; but in the smile, in the outline of the face, most especially in the mouth, and in the hands, feet, and person generally, I think nine judges in ten would have preferred the American. One peculiar charm was common to both; and it is a charm, though the strongest instance I ever saw of it in my life was in Italy, that may be said to belong, almost exclusively, to the Anglo-Saxon race; I mean that expression of the countenance which so eminently betokens feminine purity and feminine tenderness united; the look which artists love to impart to the faces of angels. Each of the girls had much of this, and I suppose it was principally owing to their heavenly blue eyes. I doubt if any woman with black or hazel eyes, notwithstanding all the brilliancy of their beauty, ever possessed this charm in the higher degree. It belonged to Grace even more than to Lucy or Emily; though of the last two I think the English girl possessed it in a slight degree the most, so far as it was connected with mere shading and color, while the American exhibited the most of it in moments of feeling and emotion. Perhaps this last advantage was owing to Lucy's submitting most to nature and to her impulses. It must be remembered, however, that I had not seen Lucy now for near two years, and two of the most important years of a young female's life, as respected her personal appearance.

As relates to character, I will not now speak as plainly as I shall be called on to do hereafter. A youth of twenty is not the best judge of such things, and I shall leave events to tell their own story in this particular.

We had been at sea a fortnight, when happening to allude to the pearl fishery, I bethought me of my own prizes. A ship that carries a numerous crew is a sort of *omnium gatherum* of human employments. For ordinarily-manned craft, seamen are necessary; but ships-of-war, privateers, and letters-of-marque, can afford, as poor Marble would express it, to generalize. We had several tradesmen in the *Crisis*—mechanics, who found the restraints of a ship necessary for their own good—and, among others, we happened to have a goldsmith. This man had offered to perforate my pearls, and to string them; an operation to which I consented. The fellow had performed his task as well as could be desired, and supplying from his own stores a pair of suitable clasps, had formed the whole into a simple, but as beautiful a necklace, as I ever laid eyes on. He had put the largest pearl of all directly in the center, and arranged the remainder, by placing several of the smaller together, separated by one of the second size, until the whole formed a row that would much more than encircle my own neck, and which, of course, would drop gracefully round that of a female.

When I produced this beautiful ornament, one that a woman of rank might have coveted, Emily did not endeavor to conceal her admiration. Unaccustomed, herself, to the higher associations of her own country, she had never seen a necklace of the same value, and she even fancied it fit for a queen. Doubtless, queens usually possess much more precious pearls than those of mine, and yet it was to be supposed they would not disdain to wear even such as they. Major Merton examined the necklace carefully, and I could see by his countenance he was surprised and pleased.

On the whole, I think it may be questioned, if any other man enjoys as many *physical* advantages, with the same means, as the American. I speak more of his habits, than of his opportunities; but I am of opinion, after seeing a good deal of the various parts of the world, that the American of moderate fortune has more physical indulgences than any other man. While this is true, however, as a whole, there are certain points on which he signally fails. He fails *often*, when it comes to the mere outward exhibition; and it is probable there is not a single well-ordered household—meaning for the purposes of comfort and representation united—in the whole country. The partic-

ular deficiency, if deficiency it be, applies in an almost exclusive degree to the use of precious stones, jewelry, and those of the more valuable metals in general. The ignorance of the value of precious stones is so great, that half the men, meaning those who possess more or less of fortune, do not even know the names of those of the commoner sorts. I doubt if one educated American in twenty could, even at this moment, tell a sapphire from an amethyst, or a turquoise from a garnet; though the women are rather more expert as lapidaries. Now I was a true American in this respect; and while I knew I possessed a very beautiful ornament, I had not the smallest idea of its value as an article of commerce. With the major it was different. He had studied such things, and he had a taste for them. The reader will judge of my surprise, therefore, when I heard him say:

"That necklace, in the hands of Rundle and Bridges, would bring a thousand pounds, in London!"

"Father!" exclaimed Emily.

"I do think it. It is not so much the size of the pearls, though these largest are not common even in that particular, but it is their extreme beauty; their color and transparency—their *water*, as it is called."

"I thought that a term applied only to diamonds," observed Emily, with an interest I wished she had not manifested.

"It is also applied to pearls—there are pearls of what is called the 'white water,' and they are of the sort most prized in Europe. The 'yellow water' are more esteemed among nations of darker skins; I suppose that is the secret. Yes, I think if you send this necklace to London, Wallingford, you will get six or eight hundred pounds for it."

"I shall never sell it, sir—at least, not as long as I can avoid it."

I saw that Emily looked at me, with an earnestness for which I could not account.

"Not sell it!" repeated her father. "Why, what in the name of Neptune can *you* do with such an ornament?"

"Keep it. It is strictly my own. I brought it up from the bottom of the sea with my own hands; removed the pearls from what the editors would call their 'native home' myself, and I feel an interest in them that I never could feel in any ornament that was purchased."

"Still, this will prove rather an expensive taste. Pray, what interest do you obtain for money, in your part of the world, Wallingford?"

"Six per cent., in New York, sir, perhaps on the better sort of permanent securities."

"And how much is sixty pounds sterling, when turned into dollars?"

"We usually say five for one, though it is not quite that; from two hundred and eighty to two hundred and ninety, all things considered—though two hundred and sixty-six, nominally, or thereabouts."

"Well, even two hundred and sixty-six dollars a year is a good deal for a young man like you to pay for the pleasure of saying he owns a pearl necklace that he cannot use."

"But it costs me nothing, sir, and of course I can lose nothing by it."

"I rather think you will lose what I tell you, if the ornament can be sold for that sum. When a man has property from which he might derive an income, and does not, he is, in one sense, and that the most important, a loser."

"I have a sister, Major Merton; I may possibly give it to her—or, should I marry, I would certainly give it to my wife."

I could see a smile struggling about the mouth of the major, which I was then too young, and I may add, too American, to understand. The incongruity of the wife of a man of two thousand, or, five-and-twenty hundred dollars a year wearing two years' income round her neck, or of being magnificent in only one item of her dress, household, or manner of living, never occurred to my mind. We can all laugh when we read of Indian chiefs wearing uniform coats and cocked hats, without any other articles of attire; but we cannot imagine inconsistencies in our own cases, that are almost as absurd in the eyes of highly sophisticated and conventional usages. To me, at that age, there

was nothing in the least out of the way in Mrs. Miles Wallingford's wearing the necklace, her husband being unequivocally its owner. As for Emily, she did not smile, but continued to hold the necklace in her own very white, plump hand, the pearls making the hand look all the prettier, while the hand assisted to increase the luster of the pearls. I ventured to ask her to put the necklace on her neck. She blushed slightly, but she complied.

"Upon my word, Emily," exclaimed the gratified father, "you become each other so well that I am losing a prejudice, and begin to believe even a poor man's daughter may be justified in using such an ornament."

The sight was certainly sufficient to justify anything of the sort. The dazzling whiteness of Miss Merton's skin, the admirable outlines of her throat and bust, and the flush which pleasure gave her cheeks, contributed largely to the beauty of the picture. It would have been difficult to say whether the charms of the woman ornamented the pearls, or those of the pearls ornamented the woman! I remember I thought, at the time, my eyes had never dwelt on any object more pleasing than was Miss Merton during the novelty of that spectacle. Nor did the pleasure cease on the instant; for I begged her to continue to wear the necklace during the remainder of the day—a request with which she had the good nature to comply. Which was most gratified by this exhibition, the young lady or myself, it might be difficult to say; for there is a mutual satisfaction in admiring and in being admired.

When I went into the cabin to say goodnight, I found Emily Merton, with the necklace in her hand, gazing at it by the light of a powerful lamp, with eyes as liquid and soft as the pearls themselves. I stood still to admire her, for never before had I seen her so bewitchingly beautiful. Her countenance was usually a little wanting in intellectual expression, though it possessed so much of that which I have described as *angelic;* but, on this occasion, it *seemed to me* to be full of ideas. Can it be possible, whispered conceit—and what very young man is entirely free from it?—can it be possible she is now thinking how happy a woman Mrs. Miles Wallingford will one day be? Am I in any manner connected with that meditating brow, that reflecting air, that fixed look, that pleased and yet doubting expression?

"I was about to send for you, Captain Wallingford," said Emily, the instant she saw me, and confirming my conceited conjectures, by blushing deeper than I had seen her before, in the whole of that blushing, sensitive, and enjoyable day; "about to send for you to take charge of your treasure."

"And could you not assume that much responsibility for a single night?"

"'Twould be too great—it is an honor reserved for Mrs. Wallingford, you know."

This was smilingly said, I fancied sweetly and kindly, and yet it was said not altogether without something that approached to *equivoque;* a sort of manner that the deep natural feeling of Grace, and needle-like truth of Lucy, had rendered unpleasant to me. I took the necklace, shook the young lady's hand for good-night—we always did that, on meeting and parting for the day—paid my compliments to the father, and withdrew.

I was dressing next morning, when Neb came bolting into my stateroom, with his Clawbonny freedom of manner, his eyes looking like lobsters, and *his* necklace of pearl, glittering between a pair of lips that might have furnished a cannibal two famous steaks. As soon as fairly established in command, I had brought the fellow aft, berthing him in the steerage, in order to have the benefit of more of his personal service than I could obtain while he was exclusively a foremast Jack. Still, he kept his watch; for it would have been cruel to deprive him of that pleasure.

"Oh! Masser Mile!" exclaimed the black, as soon as he could speak; "'e boat—'e boat!"

"What of the boat? Is any one overboard?"

"'E whale-boat, sir!—poor Captain Marble—'e whale-boat, sir!"

"I understand you, Neb—go on deck, and desire the officer of the watch to heave-to the ship, as soon as it is proper; I will come up the instant I can."

Here, then, I thought, Providence has brought us on the track of the unfortunate whale-boat; and we shall doubtless see the mutilated remains of some of our old companions—poor Marble, doubtless, from what Neb said—well, the will of God be done. I was soon dressed; and, as I went up the cabin ladder, the movement on deck denoted the nature of the excitement that now prevailed generally in the ship. Just as I reached the quarter-deck, the mainyard swung round, and the sails were brought aback. The whole crew was in commotion, and it was some little time before I could learn the cause.

The morning was misty, and the view round the ship, until within a few minutes, had been confined to a circle of less than a mile in diameter. As the sun rose, however, the mist broke away gradually, and then the watch caught a view of the whale-boat mentioned by Neb. Instead of being floating about on the ocean, with the remains of its unfortunate crew lying in its bottom, as I had expected to see it, when I caught the first glimpse of the unlooked-for object it was not a mile distant, pulling briskly for us, and containing not only a full but a strong and an animated crew.

Just at that instant, some one cried out "Sail ho!" and sure enough, a ship was seen some four or five miles to leeward, a whaler evidently, turning to windward, under easy canvas, in order to rejoin her boat, from which she had lately been separated by the night and the fog. This, then, was no more than a whaler and her boat; and, on sweeping the horizon with a glass, Talcott soon discovered, a mile to windward of the boat, a dead whale, with another boat lying by it, in waiting for the approach of the ship, which promised to fetch as far to windward, on its next tack.

"They desire to speak to us, I suppose, Mr. Talcott," I remarked. "The ship is probably an American; "it is likely the captain is in the boat, and he wishes to send letters or messages home."

A shout came from Talcott, at the next instant—then he cried out—

"Three cheers, my lads; I see Captain Marble in that boat, as plainly as I see the boat itself!"

The cheers that followed were a spontaneous burst of joy. They reached the approaching boat, and gave its inmate an earnest of his reception. In three more minutes, Marble was on the deck of his old ship. For myself, I was unable to speak; nor was poor Marble much better off, though more prepared for the interview.

"I knew you, Miles; I knew you and the bloody *Pretty Poll*, he at last got out, the tears running down his cheeks like water, "the moment the fog lifted, and gave me a fair glimpse. They've got her—yes—d—n her—God bless her, I mean—they've got her, and the bloody Frenchmen will not go home with *that* feather in their caps. Well, it couldn't have happened to a cleverer fellow; and I'm just as happy as if I had done it myself!"

There he stood, sound, safe, and sturdy as ever; and the four Sandwich Islanders were all in the boat, just as well as if they had never quitted the ship. Every man of the crew had to shake hands with Marble, congratulations were to be exchanged, and a turbulent quarter of an hour passed before it was possible to get a coherent account from the man of what had befallen him. As soon as practicable, however, he motioned for silence, and told his own story aloud for the benefit of all hands.

"You know how I left you, men," Marble commenced, swabbing his eyes and cheeks, and struggling to speak with something like an appearance of composure, "and the errand on which I went. The last I saw of you was about half an hour before the gust broke. At that time I was so near the ship as to make out she was a whaler; and, nothing doubting of being in sight of you in the morning, I thought it safer to pull alongside of *her*, than to try to hunt for the schooner

in the dark. I found an old shipmate in the whaler's captain, who was looking for a boat that had struck adrift the night before; and both parties were pleased. There was not much time for compliments however, as you all know. The ship bore up to speak you, and then she bore up, again, and again, on account of the squalls. While Mr. Wallingfod was probably hugging the wind in order to find *me*, we were running off to save our spars; and next morning we could see nothing of you. How else we missed each other is more than I can say; for I've no idee you went off and left me out here, in the middle of the ocean——"

"We cruised for you, within five miles of the spot, for a whole day!" I exclaimed, eagerly.

"No, no, Captain Marble," the men put in, in a body, "we did all that men could do, to find you."

"I know it! I could swear to it, without a word from one of you. Well, that's the whole story. We could not find you, and I stuck by the ship as a matter of course, as there was no choice between that and jumping overboard; and here has the Lord brought us together again, though we are every inch of five hundred miles from the place we parted."

I then took Marble below, and related to him all that had occurred since the separation. He listened with the deepest interest, manifesting the strongest sympathy in our success. Nothing but expressions of gratification escaped him, until I remarked, as I concluded my account—

"And here is the old ship for you, sir, just as we lost her; and glad I am to see her once more in so good hands."

"Who put that bloody poop on her, you or the Frenchman, Miles?"

"The Frenchman. Now it is peace, however, it is no great matter; and the cabin is very convenient for the major and his daughter."

"It's just like 'em! Spoiling the neatest quarter-deck on the ocean with a bloody supernumerary cabin!"

"Well, sir, as you are master now, you can have it all cut away again if you think proper."

"I! I cut away anything! I take the command of this ship from the man who has so fairly won it! If I do, may I be d——d!"

"Captain Marble! You astonish me by this language, sir; but it is nothing more than a momentary feeling, of which your own good sense—nay, even your duty to the owners—will cause you to get rid."

"You never were more mistaken in your life, Master Miles Wallingford," answered Marble, solemnly. "I thought of all this the moment I recognized the ship, and that was as soon as I saw her, and my mind was made up from that instant. I cannot be so mean as to come in at the seventh hour, and profit by your courage and skill. Besides, I have no legal right to command here. The ship was more than twenty-four hours in the enemy's hands, and she comes under the usual laws of recapture and salvage."

"But the owners, Captain Marble—remember there is a cargo to be taken in at Canton, and there are heavy interests at stake."

"By George, that would make me so much the more firm. From the first I have thought matters would be better in your hands than mine; you have an edication, and that's a wonderful thing, Miles. As to sailing a ship, or stowing her, or taking care of her in heavy weather, or finding my way across an ocean, I'll turn my back on no man; but it's a different thing when it comes to figures and calculations."

"You disappoint me greatly in all this, sir; we have gone through so much together——"

"We did not go through *the recapture of this vessel* together, boy."

"But it was *your* thought, and but for an accident, would have been your *deed*."

"I don't know that; I have reflected coolly in the matter, after I got over my mortification; and I think we should have been flogged, had we attacked the French at sea. Your own plan was better, and capitally carried out. Harkee, Miles, this much will I do, and not a jot more. You are bound to the island, I take it for

granted, to pick up odds and ends; and then you sail for Canton?"

"Precisely—I am glad you approve of it, as you must by seeing into it so readily."

"Well, at the island, fill up the schooner with such articles as will be of no use at Canton. Let her take in the copper, the English goods, and the like of that, and I will carry her home; while you can pursue the v'y'ge in the ship, as you alone have a right to do."

No arguments of mine could turn Marble from his resolution. I fought him all day on the subject, and at night he was put in command of the *Pretty Poll*, with our old second mate for his first officer.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Thou shalt seek the beach of sand,
Where the water bounds the elfin land;
Thou shalt watch the oozy brine
Till the sturgeon leaps in the light moonshine."
—DRAKE.

THERE is but a word to say of the whaler. We spoke her, of course, and parted, leaving her her boat. She passed half an hour close to us, and then went after her whale. When we lost sight of her, she was cutting in the fish, as coolly as if nothing had happened. As for ourselves, we made the best of our way for the island.

Nothing worth relating occurred during the remainder of the passage. We reached our place of destination ten days after we found Marble, and carried both the ship and schooner into the lagoon, without any hesitation or difficulty. Everything was found precisely as we had left it; two months having passed as quietly as an hour. The tents were standing, the different objects lay where they had been hastily dropped at our hurried departure, and everything denoted the unchangeable character of an unbroken solitude. Time and the seasons could only have produced any sensible alteration. Even the wreck had neither shifted her bed, nor suffered injury. There she lay, seemingly an immovable fixture on the rocks, and as likely to last as any other of the durable things around her.

It is always a relief to escape from the confinement of a ship, even if it be only to stroll along the vacant sands of some naked beach. As soon as the vessels were secured, we poured ashore in a body and the people were given a holiday. There was no longer an enemy to apprehend, and we all enjoyed the liberty of movement and the freedom from care that accompanied our peculiar situation. Some prepared lines and commenced fishing; others hauled the seine; while the less industriously disposed lounged about, selected the fruit of the cocoanut tree, or hunted for shells—of which there were many, and those extremely beautiful, scattered along the inner and outer beaches, or lying visible just within the wash of the water. I ordered two or three of the hands to make a collection for Clawbonny; paying them, as a matter of course, for their extra services. Their success was great, and I still possess the fruits of their search, as memorials of my youthful adventures.

Emily and her maid took possession of their old tents, neither of which had been disturbed; and I directed that the necessary articles of furniture should be landed for their use. As we intended to remain eight or ten days at Marble Land, there was a general disposition to make ourselves comfortable; and the crew were permitted to bring such things ashore as they desired, care being had for the necessary duties of the ships. Since quitting London, we had been prisoners, with the short interval of our former visit to this place, and it was now deemed wisest to give the people a little relaxation. To all this, I was advised by Marble; who, though a severe, and so often seemingly an obdurate man, was in the main disposed to grant as much indulgence, at suitable moments, an any officer I ever sailed with. There was an ironical severity, at times, about the man, which misled superficial observers. I have heard of a waggish boatswain in the navy, who, when disposed to menace the crew with some of his official visitations, used to cry

out, "Fellow-citizens, I'm coming among you;" and the anecdote never recurs to my mind without bringing Marble back to my recollections. When in spirits, he had much of this bitter irony in his manner; and his own early experience had rendered him somewhat insensible to *professional* suffering; but, on the whole, I always thought him a humane man.

We went into the lagoon, before the sun had risen; and before the breakfast hour of those who lived aft, we had everything landed that was necessary, and were in possession of our tents. I had ordered Neb to attend particularly to the wants of the Mertons; and, precisely as the bell of the ship struck eight, which, at that time of day, meant eight o'clock, the black came with the major's compliments, inviting "*Captain*" Wallingford and "*Captain*" Marble to breakfast.

"So it goes, Miles," added my companion, after promising to join the party in a few moments. "This arrangement about the schooner leaves us both captains, and prevents anything like your downhill work, which is always unpleasant business. *Captain* Marble and *Captain* Wallingford sound well; and I hope they may long sail in company. But natur' or art never meant me for a captain."

"Well, admitting this, where there are *two* captains, one must outrank the other, and the senior commands. You should be called *Commodore* Marble."

"None of your pleasantry, Miles," returned Marble, with a severe look and a shake of the head; "it is by your favor, and I hope by your good opinion, that I am master of even that little, half-blooded, part French, part Yankee, schooner. It is my second, and I think it will be my last command. I have generalized over my life, upon a large scale, within the last ten days, and have come to the conclusion that the Lord created me to be your mate, and not you to be mine. When natur' means a man for anything partic'lar, she doesn't set him adrift among human beings, as I was set adrift."

"I do not understand you, sir—perhaps you will give me an outline of your history; and then all will be plain."

"Miles, oblige me in one particular—it will cost you no great struggle, and will considerably relieve my mind."

"You have only to name it, sir, to be certain it will be done."

"Drop that bloody *sir*, then; its unbecoming now, as between you and me. Call me Marble, or Moses; as I call you Miles."

"Well, be it so. Now for this history of yours, which you have promised to give me, by the way, any time these two years."

"It can be told in a few words; and I hope it may be of service. A human life, properly generalized on, is at any time as good as most sermons. It is full of what I call the morality of idees. I suppose you know to what I owe my names?"

"Not I—to your sponsors in baptism, like all the rest of us, I suppose."

"You're nearer the truth than you imagine, this time, my boy. I was found, a child of a week old they told me, lying in a basket, one pleasant morning, in a stonecutter's yard, on the North River side of the town, placed upon a bit of stone that was hewing out for the head of a grave, in order, as I suppose, that the workmen would be sure to find me when they mustered at their work. Although I have passed for a down-easter, having sailed in their craft in the early part of my life, I'm in truth York born."

"And is this all you know of your origin, my dear Marble?"

"All I *want* to know, after such a hint. A man is never anxious to make the acquaintance of parents who are afraid to own him. I dare say, now, Miles, that *you* knew, and loved, and respected *your* mother?"

"Love and respect her! I worshiped her, Marble; and she deserved it all, if ever human being did!"

"Yes, yes; I can understand *that*," returned Marble, making a hole in the sand with his heel, and looking both thoughtful and melancholy. "It must be a great comfort to love and respect a mother! I've seen them, particularly young women, that I thought set quite as

much store by their mothers as they did by themselves. Well, no matter; I got into one of poor Captain Robbins's bloody currents at the first start, and have been drifting about ever since, just like the whale-boat with which we fell in, pretty much as the wind blew. They hadn't the decency to pin even a name—they might have got one out of a novel or a story-book, you know, to start a poor fellow in life with—to my shirt; no—they just set me afloat on that bit of a tombstone, and cast off the standing part of what fastened me to anything human. There they left me, to generalize on the 'arth and its ways to my heart's content."

"And you were found next morning, by the stonecutter, when he came again, to use his chisel."

"Prophecy couldn't have better foretold what happened. There I was found, sure enough; and there I made my first escape from destruction. Seeing the basket, which it seems was one in which he had brought his own dinner, the day before, and forgotten to carry away with him, he gave it a jerk to cast away the leavings, before he handed it to the child who had come to take it home, in order that it might be filled again, when out I rolled on the cold stone. There I lay, as near the grave as a tombstone, when I was just a week old."

"Poor fellow—you could only know this by report, however. And what was done with you?"

"I suppose, if the truth were known, my father was somewhere about that yard; and little do I envy the old gentleman his feelings, if he reflected much over matters and things. I was sent to the almshouse, however; stonecutters being nat'rally hard-hearted, I suppose. The fact that I was left among such people makes me think so much the more that my own father must have been one of them, or it never could have happened. At all events, I was soon rated on the almshouse books; and the first thing they did was to give me some name. I was No. 19 for about a week; at the age of fourteen days I became Moses Marble."

"It was an odd selection that your 'sponsors in baptism' made?"

"Somewhat—Moses came from the scriptur's, they tell me; there being a person of that name, as I understand, who was turned adrift pretty much as I was myself."

"Why, yes—so far as the basket and the abandonment were concerned; but he was put afloat fairly, and not clapped on a tombstone, as if to threaten him with the grave at the very outset."

"Well, Tombstone came very near being my name. At first, they thought of giving me the name of the man for whom the stone was intended; but that being Zollickoffer, they thought I never should be able to spell it. Then came Tombstone, which they thought melancholy, and so they called me Marble, consaiting, I suppose, it would make me *tough*."

"How long did you remain in the almshouse, and at what age did you first go to sea?"

"I stayed among them the public feeds, until I was eight years old, and then I took a hazy day to cut adrift from charity. At that time, Miles, our country belonged to the British—or they treated it as if it did, though I've heard wiser men than myself say, it was always our own, the King of England only happening to be our king—but I was born a British subject, and being now just forty, you can understand I went to sea several years before the Revolution."

"True—you must have seen service in that war on one side or the other?"

"If you say *both* sides, you'll not be out of the way. In 1775, I was a foretopman in the *Romney* 50, where I remained until I was transferred to the *Connecticut* 74——"

"The what?" said I, in surprise. "Had the English a line-of-battle ship called the *Connecticut?*"

"As near as I could make it out; I always thought it a big compliment for John Bull to pay the Yankees."

"Perhaps the name of your ship was the *Carnatic?* The sounds are not unlike."

"Blast me, if I don't think you've hit

it, Miles. Well, I'm glad of it, for I run from the ship, and I shouldn't half like the thought of serving a countryman such a trick. Yes, I then got on board of one of our sloops, and tried my hand at settling the account with my old masters. I was taken prisoner for my pains, but worried through the war without getting my neck stretched. They wanted to make it out, on board the old *Jarsey*, that I was an Englishman, but I told 'em just to prove it. Let 'em only prove where I was born, I said, and I would give it up. I was ready to be hanged if they could only prove where I was born. D——e, but I sometimes thought I never *was* born, at all."

"You are surely an American, Marble? A Manhattanese, born and educated?"

"Why, as it is not likely any person would import a child a week old, to plant it on a tombstone, I conclude I am. Yes, I must be *that;* and I have sometimes thought of laying claim to the property of Trinity Church, on the strength of my birthright. Well, as soon as the war was over, and I got out of prison, and that was shortly after you were born, Captain Wallingford, I went to work regularly, and have been ever since sarving as dickey, or chief mate, on board of some craft or other. If I had no family bosom to go into as a resting-place, I had my bosom to fill with solid beef and pork, and that is not to be done by idleness."

"And all this time, my good friend, you have been living, as it might be, alone in the world, without a relative of any sort?"

"As sure as you are there. Often and often have I walked through the streets of New York, and said to myself, among all these people, there is not one that I can call a relation. My blood is in no man's veins but my own."

This was said with a bitter sadness that surprised me. Obdurate, and insensible to suffering as Marble had ever appeared to me, I was not prepared to find him giving such evidence of feeling. I was then young, but now am old; and one of the lessons learned in the years that have intervened, is not to judge of men by appearances. So much sensibility is hidden beneath assumed indifference, so much suffering really exists behind smiling countenances, and so little does the exterior tell the true story of all that is to be found within, that I am now slow to yield credence to the lying surfaces of things. Most of all had I learned to condemn that heartless injustice of the world, that renders it so prompt to decide, on rumors and conjectures, constituting itself a judge from which there shall be no appeal, in cases which it has not taken the trouble to examine, and in which it had not even the power to examine evidence.

"We are all of the same family, my friend," I answered, with a good design at least, "though a little separated by time and accidents."

"Family! yes, I belong to my own family, I'm a more important man in my family than Bonaparte is in his, for I am all in all—ancestors, present time, and posterity!"

"It is, at least, your own fault you are the last; why not marry and have children?"

"Because my parents did not set me the example," answered Marble, almost fiercely. Then clapping his hand on my shoulder in a friendly way, as if to soothe me after so sharp a rejoinder, he added in a gentler tone, "Come, Miles, the major and his daughter will want their breakfasts, and we had better join them. Talking of matrimony, there's the girl for you, my boy, thrown into your arms almost nat'rally, as one might say."

"I am far from being so sure of that, Marble," I answered, as both began to walk slowly toward the tent. "Major Merton might not think it an honor, in the first place, to let his daughter marry a Yankee sailor."

"Not such a one as myself, perhaps; but why not one like you? How many generations have there been of you, now, at the place you call Clawbonny?"

"Four, from father to son, and all of us Miles Wallingfords."

"Well, the old Spanish proverb says 'it takes three generations to make a gentleman;' and here you have four to

start upon. In *my* family, all the generations have been on the same level, and I count myself old in my sphere."

"It is odd that a man like you should know anything of old Spanish proverbs!"

"What! Of *such* a proverb, think you, Miles? A man without even a father or mother—who never had either, as one may say—and he not remember such a proverb! Boy, boy, I never forget anything that so plainly recalls the tombstone, and the basket, and the almshouse, and Moses, and the names!"

"But Miss Merton might object to the present generation," I resumed, willing to draw my companion from his bitter thoughts, "however favorably disposed her father might prove to the last."

"That will be your own fault, then. Here you have her, out on the Pacific Ocean, all to yourself; and if you cannot tell your own story, and that in a way to make her believe it, you are not the lad I take you for."

I made an evasive and laughing answer; but, being quite near the tent by this time, it was necessary to change the discourse. The reader may think it odd, but that was the very first time the possibility of my marrying Emily Merton ever crossed my mind. In London, I had regarded her as an agreeable acquaintance, with just as much of the coloring of romance and of the sentimental about our intercourse, as is common with youths of nineteen and girls a little younger; but as nothing more. When we met on the island, Emily appeared to me like a friend —a *female* friend—and, of course, one to be viewed with peculiarly softened feelings; still, as only a friend. During the month we had just passed in the same ship, this tie had gradually strengthened; and I confess to a perfect consciousness of there being on board a pretty girl in her nineteenth year, of agreeable manners, delicate sentiments, and one whose presence gave the *Crisis* a charm she certainly never enjoyed during poor Captain Williams's time. Notwithstanding all this, there was something—though what that something was, I did not then know myself—which prevented me from absolutely falling in love with my fair guest. Nevertheless, Marble's suggestion was not unpleasant to me; but, on the other hand, it rather conduced to the satisfaction of my present visit.

We were kindly received by our hosts, who always seemed to remember the commencement of our acquaintance, when Marble and myself visited them together. The breakfast had a little of the land about it; for Monsieur Le Compte's garden still produced a few vegetables, such as lettuce, pepper-grass, radishes, etc.; most of which, however, had sown themselves. Three or four fowls, too, that he had left on the island in the hurry of his departure, had begun to lay; and Neb having found a nest, we had the very unusual treat of fresh eggs. I presume no one will deny that they were sufficiently "country laid."

"Emily and myself consider ourselves as old residents here," the major observed, as he gazed around him, the table being set in the open air, under some trees; "and I could almost find it in my heart to remain on this beautiful island for the remainder of my days—quite, I think, were it not for my poor girl, who might find the society of her old father rather dull work at her time of life."

"Well, major," said Marble, "you have only to let your taste be known, to have the choice among all our youngsters to be her companion. There is Mr. Talcott, a well-edicated and mannerly lad enough, and of good connections, they tell me; and as for Captain Wallingford here, I will answer for *him*. My life on it, he would give up Clawbonny, and the property on which he is the fourth of his name, to be king, or Prince of Wales of this island, with such company!"

Now, it was Marble and not I who made this speech; and yet I heartily wished it unsaid. It made me feel foolish, and I dare say it made me look foolish; and I knew it caused Emily to blush. Poor girl! she, who blushed so easily, and was so sensitive, and so delicately situated—she was entitled to have more respect paid to her feelings. The major and Marble, however, took it all very coolly, continu-

ing the discourse as if nothing out of the way had been said.

"No doubt—no doubt," answered the first; "romance always finds votaries among young poople, and this place may well excite romantic feelings in those who are older than these young men. Do you know, gentlemen, that ever since I have known this island, I have had a strong desire to pass the remainder of my days on it? The idea I have just mentioned to you, therefore, is by no means one of a moment's existence."

"I am glad, at least, dear sir," said Emily, laughing, "that the desire has not been so strong as to induce you to make formal proposals on the subject."

"You, indeed, are the great obstacle; for what could I do with a discontented girl, whose mind would be running on balls, theaters, and other amusements? We should not have even a church."

"And, Major Merton," I put in, "what could you, or any other man, do with *himself*, in a place like this, without companions, books, or occupation?"

"If a conscientious man, Miles, he might think over the past; if a wise one, he would certainly reflect on the future. I should have books, since Emily and I could muster several hundred volumes between us; and, *with* books, I should have companions. What could I do? I should have everything to create, as it might be, and the pleasure of seeing everything rising up under my own hand. There would be a house to construct—the materials of that wreck to collect—ropes, canvas, timber, tar, sugar, and divers other valuables that are still out on the reef, or which lie scattered about on the beach, to gather together, and save against a rainy day. Then I would have a thought for my poultry; and possibly you might be persuaded to leave me one or two of these pigs, of which I see the French forgot half a dozen in their haste to cheat the Spaniards. Oh! I should live like a prince and be a prince *regnant* in the bargain."

"Yes, sir, you would be captain and all hands, if that would be any gratification; but I think you would soon weary of your government, and be ready to abdicate."

"Perhaps so, Miles; yet the thought is pleasant to me; but for this dear girl, it would be particularly so. I have very few relatives; the nearest I have being, oddly enough, your own country people, gentlemen. My mother was a native of Boston, where my father, a merchant, married her; and I came very near being a Yankee myself, having been born but a week after my parents landed in England. On my father's side I have not five recognized relatives, and they are rather distant; while those on my mother's are virtually all strangers. Then I never owned a foot of this earth on which we live, in my life——"

"Nor I," interrupted Marble, with emphasis.

"My father was a younger son; and younger sons in England are generally lack-lands. My life has been such, and, I may add, my means such, that I have never been in the way of purchasing even enough earth to bury me in; and here, you see, is an estate that can be had for asking. How much land do you fancy there is in this island, gentlemen? I mean, apart from the beach, the sands, and rocks; but such as has grass, and bears trees—ground that might be tilled, and rendered productive, without much labor?"

"A hundred thousand acres," exclaimed Marble, whose calculation was received with a general laugh.

"It seems rather larger to me, sir," I answered, "than the farm at Clawbonny. Perhaps there may be six or eight hundred acres of the sort of land you mention; though the whole island must contain several thousands—possibly four or five."

"Well, four or five thousand acres of land make a good estate—but, as I see Emily is getting frightened, and is nervous under the apprehension of falling heir to such extensive possessions, I will say no more about them."

No more *was* said, and we finished our breakfasts, conversing of the past, rather than of the future. The major and Marble went to stroll along the

groves, in the direction of the wreck; while I persuaded Emily to put on her hat, and stroll—the other way.

"This is a singular notion of my father's," my fair companion remarked, after a moment of musing; "nor is it the first time, I do assure you, on which he has mentioned it. While we were here before, he spoke of it daily."

"The scheme might do well enough for two ardent lovers," said I, laughing; "but would scarcely be wise for an elderly gentleman and his daughter. I can imagine that two young people, warmly attached to each other, might get along in such a place for a year or two without hanging themselves, but I fancy even love would tire out, after a while, and they would set about building a boat, in which to be off."

"You are not very romantic, I perceive, Mr. Wallingford," Emily answered, and I thought a little reproachfully. "Now, I own that to my taste I could be happy anywhere—here, as well as in London, surrounded by my nearest and dearest friends."

"Surrounded! Ay, that would be a very different matter. Let me have your father, yourself, honest Marble, good Mr. Hardinge, Rupert, dear, dear Grace, and Lucy, with Neb, and some others of my own blacks, and I should ask no better home. The island is only in twenty, has plenty of shade, some delicious fruits, and would be easily filled—one might do here, I acknowledge, and it would be pleasant to found a colony."

"And who are these people you love so well, Mr. Wallingford, that their presence would make a desert island pleasant?"

"In the first place, Major Merton is a half-pay officer in the British service, who has been appointed to some civil station in India," I answered, gallantly. "He is a respectable, agreeable, well-informed gentleman, a little turned of fifty, who might act as judge and chancellor. Then he has a daughter——"

"I know more of her and her bad qualities than you do yourself, *sire;* but who are Rupert, and Grace, and Lucy—*dear, dear* Grace especially?"

"Dear, *dearest* Grace, madam, is my sister—my *only* sister—all the sister I ever can have, either by marriage, or any other means, and sisters are usually *dear* to young men, I believe."

"Well—I knew you had a sister, and a *dear* sister, but I also knew you had but one. Now as to Rupert——"

"He is not another sister, you may be well assured. I have mentioned to you a friend from childhood, who went to sea with me, at first, but, disliking the business, has since commenced the study of the law."

"That, then, is Rupert. I remember some such touches of his character, but did not know the name. Now, proceed on to the next——"

"What, Neb! You know *him* almost as well as I do myself. He is yonder feeding the chickens, and will save his passage money."

"But you spoke of another—that is—was there not a Mr.—Hardinge was the name, I think?"

"Oh! true—I forgot Mr. Hardinge and Lucy, though they would be two of the most important of the colonists. Mr. Hardinge is my guardian, and will continue to be so a few months longer, and Lucy is his daughter—Rupert's sister. The old gentleman is a clergyman, and would help us to keep Sunday as one should, and might perform the marriage ceremony, should it ever be required."

"Not much danger of that, I fancy, on your *desert* island—your Barrataria," observed Miss Merton, quickly.

I cannot explain the sensitiveness of certain young ladies on such points, unless it be through their consciousness. Now, had I been holding this idle talk with Lucy, the dear, honest creature would have laughed, blushed ever so little, possibly, and nodded her head in frank assent; or, perhaps, she would have said "oh! certainly," in a way to show that she had no desire to affect so silly a thing as to wish one to suppose she thought young people would not get married at Marble Land, as well as Clawbonny, or New York. Miss Merton, however, saw fit to change the discourse,

which soon turned on her father's health. On this subject she was natural and full of strong affection. She was anxious to get the major out of the warm latitudes. His liver had been touched in the West Indies, but he had hoped that he was cured, or he never would have accepted the Bombay appointment. Experience, however, was giving reason to suspect the contrary, and Emily wished him in a cold climate as soon as possible, and that with an earnestness that showed she regarded all that had been said about the island as sheer pleasantry. We continued the conversation for an hour, when, returning to the tent, I left my fair companion with a promise to be as active as possible, in order to carry the ship into a higher latitude. Still I did not deem the island a particularly dangerous place, notwithstanding its position; the trades and sea breezes, with its ample shades, rendering the spot one of the most delightful topical abodes I had ever been in.

After quitting Emily, I went to join Marble, who was alone, pacing a spot beneath the trees, that poor Le Compte had worn into a path, and which he had himself called his "quarter-deck."

"This Major Merton is a sensible man, Miles," the ex-mate began, as soon as I dropped in alongside of him, and joined in his semi-trot; "a downright, sensible sort of a philosopher-like man, accordin' to my notion."

"What has he been telling you, now, that has seized your fancy so much stronger than common?"

"Why, I was thinking of this idee of his, to remain on the island, and pass the remainder of the v'y'ge here, without slaving day and night to get up two or three rounds of the ladder of promotion, only to fall down again."

"And did the major speak of such things? I know of no disappointments of his to sour him with the world."

"I was not speaking for Major Merton, but for myself, Miles. To tell you the truth, boy, this idee seems just suited to me, and I have almost made up my mind to remain behind here when you sail."

I looked at Marble with astonishment; the subject on which the major had spoken in pleasantry, rather than with any real design of carrying his project into execution, was one that my old messmate regarded seriously! I had noted the attention with which he listened to our discourse during breakfast, and the strong feeling with which he spoke at the time, but had no notion of the cause of either. I knew the man too well not to understand at once that he was in sober earnest, and had too much experience of his nature not to foresee the greatest difficulty in turning him from his purpose. I understood the true motive to be professional mortification at all that had occurred since he had succeeded Captain Williams in command; for Marble was much too honest and too manly, to think for a moment of concealing his own misfortunes behind the mantle offered by my success.

"You have not thought of this matter sufficiently, my friend," I answered, evasively, knowing the folly of attempting to laugh this matter off; "when you have slept on it a night, you will see things differently."

"I fancy not, Miles. Here is all I want, and just what I want. After you have taken away everything that can be required for the vessels, or desirable to the owners, there will be enough left to keep me a dozen lives."

"It is not on account of food that I speak—the island alone, in its fruits, fish, and birds, to say nothing as to the seeds, and fowls, and pigs we could leave you, would be sufficient to keep fifty men; but think of the solitude, the living without object, the chances of sickness, the horrible death that would follow to one unable to rise and assist himself, and all the other miseries of being alone. Depend on it, man was not created to live alone. Society is indispensable to him, and——"

"I have thought of it all, and find it entirely to my taste. I tell you, Miles, I should be exactly in my sphere in this island, and that as a hermit. I do not say I should not like *some* company, if it could be yourself, or Talcott, or the major, or even Neb; but no company is better

than bad; and as for asking, or *allowing* any one to stay with me, it is out of the question. I did, at first, think of keeping the Sandwich Islanders; but it would be bad faith, and they would not be likely to remain quiet after the ship had sailed. No, I will remain alone. You will probably report the island when you get home, and that will induce some vessel, which may be passing near, to look for me, so I shall hear of you all every four or five years."

"Gracious Heaven! Marble, you cannot be serious in so mad a design?"

"Just look at my situation, Miles, and decide for yourself. I am without a friend on earth—I mean nat'ral friend—I know what sort of friend you are, and parting with you will be the toughest of all—but I have not a relation on the wide earth—no property, no home, no one to wish to see me return, not even a cellar to lay my head in. To me all places are alike, with the exception of this, which, having discovered, I look upon as my own."

"You have a *country*, Marble, and that is the next thing to family and home—overshadows all."

"Ay, and I'll have a country here. This will be America, having been discovered by Americans, and in their possession. You will leave me the buntin', and I'll show the stars and stripes of a 4th of July, just as you will show 'em in some other part of the world. I was born Yankee, at least, and I'll die Yankee. I've sailed under that flag, boy, ever since the year '77, and will not sail under another, you may depend on it."

"I never could justify myself to the laws for leaving a man behind me in such a place."

"Then I'll run, and that will make all right. But you know well enough, boy, that leaving a captain is one thing, and leaving a man another."

"And what shall I tell all your acquaintances, those who have sailed with you so often and so long, has become of their old shipmate?"

"Tell 'em that the man who was once *found* is now *lost*," answered Marble, bitterly. "But I'm not such a fool as to think myself of so much importance as you seem to imagine. The only persons who will consider the transaction of any interest will be the newspaper gentry, and they will receive it only as *news*, and thank you about half as much as they would for a murder or a robbery, or the poisoning of a mother and six little children."

"I think, after all, you would scarcely find the means of supporting yourself," I added, looking round in affected doubt; for I felt at each instant how likely my companion was to adhere to his notion, and this from knowing him so well. "I doubt if the cocoa is healthy all the year round, and there must be seasons when the trees do not bear."

"Have no fear of that sort. I have my own fowling-piece, and you will leave me a musket or two, with some ammunition. Transient vessels, now the island is known, will keep up the supply. There are two hens setting at this moment, and a third has actually hatched. Then one of the men tells me there is a litter of pigs near the mouth of the bay. As for the hogs and the poultry, the shell-fish and berries will keep them; but there are fifteen hogsheads of sugar on the beach, besides thirty or forty more in the wreck, and all above water. There are casks of beans and peas, the sea-stores of the French, besides lots of other things. I can plant, and fish, and shoot, and make a fence from the ropes of the wreck, and have a large garden, and all that a man can want. Our own poultry, you know, has long been out, but there is still a bushel of Indian corn left that was intended for their feed. One quart of that will make me a rich man in such a climate as this, and with soil like that on the flat between the two groves. I own a chest of tools, and am, ship-fashion, both a tolerable carpenter and blacksmith; and I do not see that I shall want for anything. You *must* leave half the things that are scattered about, and so far from being a man to be pitied I shall be a man to be envied. Thousands of wretches in the greatest thoroughfares of London would gladly exchange their crowded streets and poverty for my solitude and abundance.

I began to think Marble was not in a state of mind to reason with, and changed the subject. The day passed in recreation as had been intended, and next morning we set about filling up the schooner. We struck in all the copper, all the English goods, and such portions of the Frenchman's cargo as would be most valuable in America. Marble, however, had announced to others his determination to remain behind, to abandon the seas, and to turn hermit. As his first step, he gave up the command of the *Pretty Poll*, and I was obliged to restore her, again, to our old third mate, who was every way competent to take care of her. At the end of the week the schooner was ready, and despairing of getting Marble off in *her*, I ordered her to sail for home, *via* Cape Horn, giving especial instructions not to attempt Magellan. I wrote to the owners, furnishing an outline of all that had occurred, and of my future plans, simply remarking that Mr. Marble had declined acting, out of motives of delicacy, since the recapture of the ship, and that in future their interests must remain in my care. With these dispatches the schooner sailed. Marble and I watched her until her sails became a white speck on the ocean, after which she suddenly disappeared.

As for the ship, she was all ready; and my only concern now was in relation to Marble. I tried the influence of Major Merton; but, unfortunately, that gentleman had already said too much in favor of our friend's scheme, in ignorance of its effect, to gain much credit when he turned round and espoused the other side. The arguments of Emily failed also. In fact, it was not reason, but feeling that governed Marble; and, in a bitter hour, he had determined to pass the remainder of his days where he was. Finding all persuasion useless, and the season approaching when the winds rendered it necessary to sail, I was compelled to yield, or resort to force. The last I was reluctant to think of, nor was I certain the men would have obeyed me had I ordered them to use it. Marble had been their commander so long, that he might, at any moment, have resumed the charge of the ship; and it was not probable his orders would have been braved under any circumstances that did not involve illegality or guilt. After a consultation with the major, I found it necessary to yield to this whim, though I did so with greater reluctance than I ever experienced on any other occasion.

CHAPTER XX.

"Pass on, relentless world! I grieve
No more for all that thou hast riven!
Pass on, in God's name—only leave
The things thou never yet hast given."
—LUNT.

AFTER every means had been uselessly exhausted to persuade Marble from his design, it only remained to do all we could to make him comfortable and secure. Of enemies there was no danger, and care was not necessary for defense. We got together, however, some of the timber, planks, and other materials that were remaining at the ship-yard, and built him a cabin, that offered much better shelter against the tropical storms that sometimes prevailed than any tent could yield. We made this cabin as wide as a plank is long, or twelve feet, and some five or six feet longer. It was well sided and tightly roofed, having three windows and a door. The lights of the wreck supplied the first, and her cabin door the last. We had hinges, and everything that was necessary, to keep things in their place.

There was no chimney required, fire being unnecessary for warmth in that climate; but the French had brought their caboose from the wreck, and this we placed under a proper covering at a short distance from the hut, the strength of one man being insufficient to move it. We also inclosed, by means of ropes, and posts made of the ribs of the wreck, a plot of ground of two acres in extent, where the land was the richest and unshaded, so as to prevent the pigs from injuring the vegetables; and, poor Marble knowing little of gardening, I had a melancholy pleasure in seeing the whole piece dug, or rather hoed up, and sown and

planted myself, before we sailed. We put in corn, potatoes, peas, beans, lettuce, radishes, and several other things, of which we found the seeds in the French garden. We took pains, moreover, to transport from the wreck many articles that it was thought might prove of use, though they were too heavy for Marble to handle. As there were near forty of us, all busy in this way for three or four days, we effected a great deal, and may be said to have got the island in order. I felt the same interest in the duty that I should in bestowing a child for life.

Marble, himself, was not much among us all this time. He rather complained that I should leave him nothing to do, though I could see he was touched by the interest we manifested in his welfare. The French launch had been used as the means of conveyance between the wreck and the beach, and we found it where it had been left by its original owners, anchored to leeward of the island, and abreast of the ship. It was the last thing I meddled with, and it was my care to put it in such a state that, at need, it might be navigated across that tranquil sea, to some other island, should Marble feel a desire to abandon his solitude. The disposition I made of the boat was as follows :—

The launch was large and coppered, and it carried two lug-sails. I had both masts stepped, with the yards, sails, sheets, etc., prepared, and put in their places ; a stout rope was next carried round the entire boat, outside, and a few inches below the gunwale, where it was securely nailed. From this rope led a number of lanyards, with eyes turned into their ends. Through these eyes I rove a sort of ridge-rope, leading it also through the eyes of several stanchions that were firmly stepped on the thwarts. The effect, when the ridge-rope was set up, was to give the boat the protection of this waist-cloth, which inclined in-board, however, sufficiently to leave an open passage between the two sides, of only about half the beam of the boat. To the ridge-rope and lanyards I had tarpaulins firmly attached, tacking their lower edges strongly to the outer sides of the boat. By this arrangement, when all was in its place, and properly secured, a sea might break, or a wave slap against the boat, without her taking in much water. It doubled her security in this particular, more than answering the purposes of a half-deck and wash-board. It is true, a very heavy wave might carry all away ; but very heavy waves would probably fill the boat under any circumstances. Such a craft could only find safety in her buoyancy ; and we made her as safe as an undecked vessel very well could be.

Marble watched me while I was superintending these changes in the boat with a good deal of interest ; and one evening —I had announced an intention to sail next morning, the major and Emily having actually gone on board that evening— he got my arm and led me away from the spot, like a man who has urgent business. I could see that he was much affected, and had strong hopes he intended to announce a change of purpose. His hand actually trembled, the whole time he grasped my arm.

"God bless you, Miles! God bless you, dear boy!" he said, speaking with difficulty, as soon as we were out of earshot from the others. "If any being could make me pine for the world, it would be such a friend as you. I could live on without father or mother, brother or sister, ship or confidence of my owners, good name even, were I sure of meeting such a lad as yourself in only every thousandth man I fell in with. But, young as you are, you know how it is with mankind ; and no more need be said about it. All I ask now is, that you will knock off with this 'making him comfortable,' as you call it, or you'll leave me nothing to do for myself. I can fit out that boat as well as e'er a man in the *Crisis*, I'd have you to know."

"I am well aware of that, my friend: but I am not so certain that you *would*. In that boat, I am in hopes you will follow us out to sea, and come on board again, and take your old place as master."

Marble shook his head, and I believe he saw by my manner that I had no serious

expectations of the sort I named. We walked some distance further, in silence, before he again spoke. Then he said suddenly, and in a way to show how much his mind was troubled—

"Miles, my dear boy, you must let me hear from you!"

"Hear from me! By what means, pray? You cannot expect the Postmaster General will make a mail route between New York and this island?"

"Pooh! I'm getting old, and losing my memory. I was generalizing on friendship, and the like of that, and the idea ran away with me. I know, of course, when you are out of sight, that I shall be cut off from the rest of the world—probably shall never see a human face again. But what of that? My time cannot be long now, and I shall have the fish, fowls, and pigs to talk to. To tell you the truth, Miles, Miss Merton gave me her own Bible yesterday, and, at my request, she pointed out that part which gives an account about Moses in the bulrushes, and I've just been looking it over; it is easy enough, now, to understand why I was called Moses."

"But Moses did not think it necessary to go and live in a desert, or on an uninhabited island, merely because he was found in those bulrushes."

"*That* Moses had no occasion to be ashamed of his parents. It was fear, not shame, that sent him adrift. Nor did Moses ever let a set of lubberly Frenchmen seize a fine, stout ship, like the *Crisis*, with a good, able-bodied crew of forty men on board of her."

"Come, Marble, you have too much sense to talk in this manner. It is, fortunately, not too late to change your mind; and I will let it be understood that you did so at my persuasion."

This was the commencement of a final effort on my part to induce my friend to abandon his mad project. We conversed quite an hour, until I had exhausted my breath, as well as my arguments, indeed; and all without the least success. I pointed out to him the miserable plight he must be in, in the event of illness; but it was an argument that had no effect on a man who had never had even a headache in his life. As for society, he cared not a straw for it when ashore, he often boasted; and he could not yet appreciate the effects of total solitude. Once or twice, remarks escaped him as if he thought it possible I might one day return; but they were ventured in pleasantry, rather than with any appearance of seriousness. I could see that the self-devoted hermit had his misgivings, but I could obtain no verbal concession from him to that effect. He was reminded that the ship must positively sail next day, since it would not do to trifle with the interests of the owners any longer.

"I know it, Miles," Marble answered, "and no more need be said on the subject. Your people are through with their work, and here comes Neb to report the boat ready to go off. I shall try my hand ashore to-night, alone; in the morning, I suppose you would like to take an old shipmate by the hand for the last time, and you will nat'rally look for me at the water-side. Good night! Before we part, however, I may as well thank you for the supply of clothes I see you have put in my hut. It was scarcely wanted, as I have enough needles and thread to supply a slop-shop; and the old duck left by the French will keep me in jackets and trousers for the remainder of my days. Good night, my dear boy! God bless you—God bless you!"

It was nearly dark, bnt I could see that Marble's eyes looked moist, and feel that his hand again trembled. I left him, not without the hope that the solitude of this night, the first in which he had been left by himself, would have the effect to lessen his desire to be a hermit. When I turned in, it was understood that all hands were to be called at daylight, and the ship unmoored.

Talcott came to call me, at the indicated moment. I had made him chief mate, and taken one of the Philadelphians for second officer; a young man who had every requisite for the station, and one more than was necessary, or a love of liquor. But drunkards do tolerably well on board a ship in which reasonable disci-

pline is maintained. For that matter, Neptune ought to be a profound moralist, as youths are very generally sent to sea to cure most of the ethical ailings. Talcott was directed to unmoor, and heave short. As for myself, I got into a boat and pulled ashore, with an intention of making a last and strong appeal to Marble.

No one was visible on the island when we reached it. The pigs and fowls were already in motion, however, and were gathering near the door of the hut, where Marbie was accustomed to feed them about that hour; the fowls on *sugar*, principally. I proceeded to the door, opened it, entered the place, and found it empty! Its late inmate was then up, and abroad. He had probably passed a sleepless night, and sought relief in the fresh air of the morning. I looked for him in the adjacent grove, on the outer beach, and in most of his usual haunts. He was nowhere visible. A little vexed at having so long a walk before me, at a moment when we were so much pressed for time, I was about to follow the grove to a distant part of the island, to a spot that I knew Marble frequented a good deal, when moody; but my steps were arrested by an accidental glance at the lagoon. I missed the Frenchman's launch, or the boat I had myself caused to be rigged with so much care, the previous day, for the intended hermit's especial advantage. This was a large boat; one that had been constructed to weigh a heavy anchor, and I had left her moored between a grapnel and the shore, so securely, as to forbid the idea she could have been moved, in so quiet a time, without the aid of hands. Rushing to the water, I got into my own boat, and pulled directly on board.

On reaching the ship, a muster of all hands were ordered. The result proved that everybody was present, and at duty. It followed that Marble, alone, had carried the boat out of the lagoon. The men who had had the anchor-watches during the past night were questioned on the subject, but no one had seen or heard anything of a movement in the launch. Mr. Talcott was told to continue his duty, while I went aloft myself, to look at the offing. I was soon in the main-topmast cross-trees, where a view was commanded of the whole island, a few covers excepted, of all the water within the reef, and a wide range without. Nowhere was the boat or Marble to be seen. It was barely possible that he had concealed himself behind the wreck, though I did not see how ever this could be done, unless he had taken the precaution to strike the launch's masts.

By this time our last anchor was aweigh, and the ship was clear of the bottom. The topsails had been hoisted before I went aloft, and everything was now ready for filling away. Too anxious to go on deck, under such circumstances, and a lofty position being the best for ascertaining the presence of rocks, I determined to remain where I was, and con the ship through the passes, in my own person. An order was accordingly given to set the jib, and to swing the head yards, and to get the spanker on the ship. In a minute, the *Crisis* was again in motion, moving steadily toward the inlet. As the lagoon was not entirely free from danger, coral rocks rising in places, quite near the surface of the water, I was obliged to be attentive to the pilot's duty until we got into the outer bay, when this particular danger in a great measure disappeared. I could then look about me with more freedom. Though we so far changed our position, as respected the wreck, as to open new views of it, no launch was to be seen behind it. By the time the ship reached the passage through the reef, I had little hope of finding it there.

We had got to be too familiar with the channels to have any difficulty in taking the ship through them; and we were soon fairly to windward of the reef. Our course, however, lay to leeward; and we passed round the southern side of the rocks, under the same easy canvas, until we got abreast, and within half a cable's length of the wreck. To aid my own eyes, I had called up Talcott and Neb; but neither of us could obtain the least glimpse

of the launch. Nothing was to be seen about the wreck; though I took the precaution to send a boat to it. All was useless. Marble had gone out to sea, quite alone, in the Frenchman's launch; and, though twenty pairs of eyes were now aloft, no one could fancy that he saw anything in the offing that resembled a boat.

Talcott and myself had a private interview on the subject of Marble's probable course. My mate was of opinion that our friend had made the best of his way for some of the inhabited islands, unwilling to remain here when it came to the pinch, and yet ashamed to rejoin us. I could hardly believe this; in such a case, I thought he would have waited until we had sailed; when he might have left the island also, and nobody been the wiser. To this Talcott answered that Marble probably feared our importunities; possibly, compulsion. It seemed singular to me, that a man who regretted his hasty decision should adopt such a course; and yet I was at a loss to explain the matter much more to my own satisfaction. Nevertheless, there was no remedy. We were as much in the dark as it was possible to be with a knowledge of the circumstance that the bird had flown.

We hovered around the reef for several hours, most of which time I passed in the cross-trees, and some of it on the royal yard. Once, I thought I saw a small speck on the ocean, dead to windward, that resembled a boat's sail; but there were so many birds flying about, and glancing beneath the sun's rays, that I was reluctantly compelled to admit it was probably one of them. At meridian, therefore, I gave the order to square away, and to make sail on our course. This was done with the greatest reluctance, however, and not without a good deal of vacillation of purpose. The ship moved away from the land rapidly, and by two o'clock, the line of cocoanut trees that fringed the horizon astern sunk entirely beneath the rolling margin of our view. From that moment, I abandoned the expectation of ever seeing Moses Marble again, though the occurrence left all of us sad for several days.

Major Merton and his daughter were on the poop nearly the whole of this morning. Neither interfered in the least; for the old soldier was too familiar with discipline to venture an opinion concerning the management of the ship. When we met at dinner, however, the conversation naturally turned on the disappearance of our old friend.

"It is a thousand pities that pride should have prevented Marble from acknowledging his mistake," observed the major, "and thus kept him from getting a safe passage to Canton, where he might have left you, and joined another ship, had he thought it necessary."

"Where we shall do the same thing, I suppose, dear sir," added Emily, with a manner that I thought marked, "and thus relieve Captain Wallingford from the encumbrance of our presence."

"Me!—call your delightful society anything but an encumbrance, I beg of you, Miss Merton," I rejoined in haste. "Now that Mr. Le Compte has furnished this comfortable cabin, and you are no longer at any inconvenience to yourselves, I would not be deprived of the advantage and pleasure of this association for more than I dare mention."

Emily looked gratified; while her father appeared to me to be thoughtful. After a brief pause, however, the major resumed the discourse.

"I should certainly feel myself bound to make many apologies for the trouble we are giving," he said, "especially, since I understand from Wallingford, he will not accept, either for himself or his owners, anything like compensation even for the food we consume, were it not that we are here by constraint, and not by any agency of our own. As soon as we reach Canton, however, I shall feel it a duty to get on board the first English ship that will receive us."

I stole a glance at Emily, but could not understand the expression of her countenance, as she heard this announcement. Of course, I made an earnest protest against the major's doing anything of the sort; and yet I could not well find any sufficient reason for urging him to remain

where he was, beyond my own gratification. I could not go either to England or Bombay; and I took it for granted Major Merton wished to proceed at once, to one, if not to both of these places. We conversed, a little generally perhaps, on this subject for some time longer; and when I left the cabin, it struck me, Emily's melancholy had in no degree lessened.

It is a long road to traverse, over half of the Pacific. Weeks and weeks were thus occupied; Talcott and myself profiting by every suitable occasion, to enjoy the advantages of the association chance had thus thrown in our way. I make no doubt I was greatly benefited by my constant communications with the Mertons; the major being a cultivated, though not a particularly brilliant man; while I conceive it to be utterly impossible for two young men, of our time of life and profession, to be daily, almost hourly, in the company of a young woman like Emily Merton, without losing some of the peculiar roughness of the sea, and getting, in its place, some small portion of the gentler qualities of the saloon. I date a certain *à plomb*, an absence of shyness in the company of females, from this habitual intercourse with one of the sex who had, herself, been carefully educated in the conventionalities of respectable, if not of very elegant or sophisticated society.

At length we reached the China seas, and falling in to windward, we made a quick run to Canton. It now became necessary for me to attend to the ship and the interests of my owners; suffering my passengers to land at Whampoa, with the understanding that we were to meet before either party sailed. I soon disposed of the sandal wood and skins, and found no difficulty in procuring teas, nankeens, china-ware, and the other articles pointed out in the instructions to poor Captain Williams. I profited by the occasion, also, to make certain purchases on my own account, that I had a presentiment would be particularly agreeable to the future mistress of Clawbonny, let that lady turn out to be whomsoever she might. The dollars obtained on the west coast of South America enabled me to do this; my instructions giving the necessary authority to use a few of them on private account. My privilege as master rendered all proper.

In a word, the residence of six or eight weeks at Canton proved a very advantageous affair for those whose money was embarked in the *Crisis*. Sandal wood and sea-otter skins brought particularly high prices; while teas, and the manufactures of the country, happened to be low. I had no merit in this—not a particle; and yet I reaped the advantage, so far as advantage was connected with the mere reputation of the voyage—success being of nearly as great account in commerce as in war. It is true, I worked like a dog; for I worked under an entirely novel sense of responsibility, and with a feeling I am certain that could never have oppressed me in the care of my own property; and I deserved some portion of the credit subsequently obtained. At all events I was heartily rejoiced when the hatches were on, and the ship was once more ready for sea.

It now became a duty, as well as a pleasure, to seek Major Merton, whom I had seen but once or twice during the last two months. He had passed that time at Whampoa, while I had been either at the factories or on board. The major was occupied when I called, and Emily received me alone. When she learned that I was ready to sail for home, and had come to take my leave, it was easy to see that she was uneasy if not distressed. I felt unhappy at parting, too, and perhaps I had less scruple about saying as much.

"God only knows, Miss Merton, whether we are ever to be permitted to see each other again," I remarked, after the preliminary explanations had been made.

The reader will remember that I am now an old man, and that vanity no longer has any of that influence over me which it might be supposed to possess over one of more juvenile hopes and feelings; that I relate facts, without reference to their effect on myself, beyond the general salvo of some lingering weaknesses of humanity. I trust, therefore, I shall be understood in all my necessary allusions

to the estimation in which I was apparently held by others. Emily fairly started when I made this remark concerning the probable duration of the approaching separation, and the color left her cheek.

Her pretty white hand shook, so that she had difficulty in using her needle; and there was an appearance of agitation and distress about the charming girl, that I had never before witnessed in one whose manner was usually so self-possessed and calm. I now know the reason why I did not throw myself on my knees, and beg the charming girl to consent to accompany me to America, though I wondered at myself afterward, when I came to reflect coolly on all that had passed, for my stoicism. I will not affirm that I fancied Emily's agitation to be altogether owing to myself, but I confess to an inability to account for it in any other manner as agreeable to myself. The appearance of Major Merton at that instant, however, prevented everything like a scene, and probably restored us both to a consciousness of the necessity of seeming calm. As for the major himself, he was evidently far from being unconcerned, something having occurred to disturb him. So very apparent was this, that I commenced the discourse by asking if he were unwell.

"Always *that*, I fear, Miles," he answered; "my physician has just told me frankly, unless I get into a cold climate as soon as possible, my life will not be worth six months' purchase."

"Then sail with me, sir," I cried, with an eagerness and heartiness that must have proved my sincerity. "Happily, I am not too late to make the offer; and, as for getting away, I am ready to sail tomorrow."

"I am forbidden to go near Bombay," continued the major, looking anxiously at his daughter; "and that appointment must be abandoned. If I could continue to hold it there is no probability of a chance to reach my station this half year."

"So much the better for me, sir. In four or five months from this moment I will land you in New York, where you will find the climate cold enough for any disease. I ask you as friends, as guests, not as passengers; and to prove it, the table in the upper cabin, in future, shall be mine. I have barely left room in the lower cabin to sleep or dress in, having filled it with my own private venture, as is my right."

"You are as generous as kind, Miles; but what will your owners think of such an arrangement?"

"They have no right to complain. The cabin and passengers, should any of the last offer, after deducting a very small allowance for the ship's portion of the food and water, are mine by agreement. All the better food I find at my own charge; and should you insist on remunerating the owners for the coarser, or such as they find, you can do so—it will be less than a hundred dollars at the most."

"On these conditions, then, I shall thankfully profit by your offer, attaching, however, one more that I trust you may be permitted to fulfill. It is important to me that I reach England—can you touch at St. Helena?"

"Willingly, if it be your wish. The health of the crew, moreover, may render it desirable."

"There, then, I will quit you, if an opportunity offer to proceed to England. Our bargain is made, dear Miles; and tomorrow I shall be ready to embark."

I think Emily never looked more beautiful than she did while listening to this arrangement. It doubtless relieved her mind on the painful subject of her father's health, and I fancied it relieved it also on the subject of our own immediate separation. Months must elapse before we could reach St. Helena; and who could foresee what those months might bring forth? As I had a good deal to do at such a moment, I took my leave, with my feelings lightened, as it might be, of a burden. The reader will at once infer I was in love. But he will be mistaken. I was not in love, though my imagination, to use a cant phrase of some of the sects, was greatly exercised. Lucy, even then, had a hold of my *heart* in a way of which I was ignorant myself; but it was not in

nature for a youth, just approaching his majority, to pass months and months, almost alone, in the society of a lovely girl who was a year or two his junior, and not admit some degree of tenderness toward her in his feelings. The circumstances were sufficient to try the constancy of the most faithful swain that ever lived. Then it must be remembered that I had never professed to love Lucy—was not at all aware that she entertained any other sentiment toward me than that she entertained toward Rupert; whereas Emily—but I will not prove myself a coxcomb on paper, whatever I might have been, at the moment, in my own imagination.

Next day, at the appointed hour, I had the happiness to receive my old passengers. It struck me that Talcott was as much gratified as I was myself, for he, too, had both pleasure and improvement in Emily Merton's society. It has often been said that the English East-India ships are noted for quarreling and making love. The quarrels may be accounted for on the same principle as the love-making, viz., propinquity; the same proximity producing hostility in those sterner natures, that in others of a gentler cast produces its opposite feeling.

We sailed, and it is scarcely necessary to tell the reader how much the tedium of so long a voyage and the monotony of a sea voyage was relieved by the graces and gentle intercourse of our upper cabin. The other apartment being so crowded and hot, I passed most of my time in the poop, which was both light and airy. Here I generally found the father and daughter, though often the latter alone. I played reasonably well on the flute and violin, and had learned to accompany Emily on her piano, which, it will be remembered, Monsieur Le Compte had caused to be transferred from the Bombay ship to his own vessel, and which had subsequently been saved from the wreck.

Talcott also played on the flute, far better than I did myself, and we frequently made a trio, producing very respectable sea music—better, indeed, than Neptune often got for his smiles. In this manner, then, we traveled our long road, sometimes contending with head winds and cross seas, sometimes becalmed, and sometimes slipping along at a rate that rendered everybody contented and happy.

In passing the Straits of Sunda, I related to Major Merton and Emily the incidents of the *John's* affair with the proas, and her subsequent loss on the Island of Madagascar; and was rewarded by the interest they took in the tale. We all spoke of Marble, as indeed we often did, and expressed our regrets at his absence. The fate of my old shipmate was frequently discussed among us, there being a great diversity of opinion on the subject. As for the major, he thought poor Marble must be lost at sea, for he did not perceive how any one man could manage a boat all alone by himself. Talcott, who had juster notions of what a seaman could do, was of opinion that our late commander had run to leeward, in the hope of finding some inhabited island, preferring the association of even cannibals, when it came to the trying moment, to total solitude. I thought he had gone to windward, the boat being so well equipped for that service, and that Marble was in the expectation of falling in with some of the whalers, who were known to be cruising in certain latitudes. I was greatly struck, however, by a remark made by Emily, on the evening of the very day when we passed the Straits of Sunda.

"Should the truth be ever known, gentlemen," she said, "I am of opinion it will be found that poor Mr. Marble only left the island to escape from your importunities, and returned to it after the ship disappeared; and that he is there at this moment, enjoying all the happiness of a hermit."

This might be true, and from that hour the thought would occasionally recur to my mind. As I looked forward to passing at least several more years at sea, I secretly determined to ascertain the fact for myself, should occasion ever offer. In the meantime, the *Crisis* had reached a part of the ocean where, in those days, it was incumbent on those who had the charge of a ship to keep a vigilant look-

out for enemies. It seems we were not fated to run the gauntlet of these pirates entirely unharmed.

Early on the following morning, I was awakened by Talcott's giving me a hearty shake of the shoulder.

"Turn out at once, Captain Wallingford," cried my mate; "the rascals are closing around us like crows about a carcass. As bad luck will have it, we have neither room nor breeze to spare. Everything looks like a busy morning for us, sir."

In just three minutes from that moment, I was on deck, where all hands were soon collected, the men tumbling up with their jackets in their hands. Major Merton was already on the poop, surveying the scene with a glass of his own; while the two mates were clearing away the guns, and getting the ship in a state to make a suitable defense. To me, the situation was altogether novel. I had been six times in the presence of enemies before, and twice as commander; but never under circumstances that called so imperiously for seamanship and good conduct. The ocean seemed covered with enemies, Major Merton declaring that he could count no less than twenty-eight proas, all full of men, and some of them armed with artillery. These chaps were ahead, astern, to windward, and to leeward; and, what was worse, they had just wind enough to suit their purposes, there being about a five-knot breeze. It was evident that the craft acted in concert, and that they were desperately bent on our capture, having closed around us in this manner in the night. Nevertheless, we were a warm ship for a merchantman; and not a man in the *Crisis* betrayed any feeling that indicated any other desire than a wish to resist to the last. As for Neb, the fellow was in a broad grin the whole time; he considered the affair as a bit of fun. Yet this negro was afraid to visit certain places about the farm in the dark, and could not have been induced to cross a churchyard alone, under a bright sun, I feel well persuaded. He was the oddest mixture of superstitious dread and lion-hearted courage I ever met with in my life.

It was still early, when the proas were near enough to commence serious operations. This they did, by a nearly simultaneous discharge of about a dozen guns, principally sixes, that they carried mounted in their bows. The shot came whistling in among our spars and rigging, literally from every direction, and three struck, though they were not of a size to do any serious injury. Our people were at quarters, having managed to man both batteries, though it left scarcely any one to look after the braces and rigging, and none but the officers with small arms.

Mr. Merton must have felt that his and his daughter's liberty, if not their lives, were in the keeping of a very youthful commander; still, his military habits of subordination were so strong, he did not venture even a suggestion. I had my own plan, and was just of an age to think it derogatory to my rank to ask advice of any one. The proas were strongest ahead and on both bows, where they were collecting to the number of near twenty, evidently with the intention of boarding, should an opportunity offer; while astern, and on our quarter, they were much fewer, and far more scattered. The reason of all this was apparent by our course, the pirates naturally supposing we should continue to stand on.

Orders were given to haul up the mainsail and to man the spanker brails. The men were taken from the starboard battery, exclusively, to perform this work. When all was ready, the helm was put up, and the ship was brought as short round on her heel as possible, hauling up, on an easy bowline, on the other tack. In coming round, we delivered all our larboard guns among the crowd of enemies, well crammed with grape; and the distance being just right for scattering, this broadside was not without effect. As soon as braced up, on the other track, we opened starboard and larboard, on such of the chaps as came within range, clearing our way as we went. The headmost proas all came round in chase; but being from half a mile to a mile astern, we had time to open a way out of the circle, and to drive all the proas who were now ahead

of us to take refuge among the crowd of their fellows. The maneuver was handsomely executed; and in twenty minutes we ceased firing, having all our enemies to the westward of us, and in one group; this was an immense advantage, as it enabled us to fight with a single broadside, prevented our being raked, and rendered our own fire more destructive, by exposing to it a more concentrated, and, at the same time, a larger object. I ought to have said before that the wind was at the southward.

The *Crisis* now tacked, setting the courses and royals. The ship lay up well, and the proas having collected around their admiral, there was a prospect of her passing to windward of everything. Six of the fellows, however, seemed determined to prevent this, by hauling close on a wind, and attempting to cross our bows, firing as they did so. The ship stood on, apparently as if to intercept them; when, finding ourselves near enough, we kept away about three points and swept directly down in the center of the main body of the proas. As this was done, the enemy, taken by surprise, cleared a way for us, and we passed the whole of them, delivering grape and canister as fast as we could deal it out. In the height of the affair, and the thickest of the smoke, three or four of the proas were seen quite near us, attempting to close; but I did not think it necessary to call the people from the guns, which were worked with great quickness, and did heavy execution. I fancy the pirates found it hotter than they liked, for they did not keep on with us; though our lofty sails gave us an advantage, and would have enabled us to leave them, had they pursued a different course. As it was, we were clear of them in about five minutes; and the smoke beginning to rise, we soon got a view of what had been done in that brief space. In order to increase our distance, however, we still kept away, running pretty fast through the water.

By the confusion which prevailed among the pirates, the rascals had been well peppered. One had actually sunk, and five or six were round the spot endeavoring to pick up the crew. Three more had suffered in their spars, and the movements indicated that all had enough. As soon as satisfied of this, I hauled the ship up to her course, and we continued to leave the cluster of boats, which remained around the spot where their consort had gone down. Those of the fellows to windward, however, did not seem disposed to give it up, but followed us for two hours, by which time the rest of their flotilla were hull down. Believing there was now plenty of room, I tacked toward these persevering gentry, when they went about like tops, and hauled off sharp on a wind. We tacked once more to our course, and were followed no further.

The captain of a pepper ship afterward told me that our assailants lost forty-seven men, mostly killed, or died of their hurts, and that he had understood that the same officer commanded the *Crisis* that had commanded the *John*, in *her* affair, near the same spot. We had some rigging cut, a few of our spars slightly injured, and two men hurt, one of whom happened to be Neb. The man most hurt died before we reached the cape, but more from the want of surgical assistance than from the original character of his wound. As for Neb, he went to duty before we reached St. Helena. For my part, I was surprised one of the proas did not get down his throat, his grin being wide enough, during the whole affair, to admit of the passage of a two-decker.

We went into the island, as had been agreed, but no ship offering, and none being expected soon, it became necessary for my passengers to continue on with us to New York. Emily had behaved uncommonly well in the brush with the pirates, and everybody was glad to keep her in the ship. The men swore she brought good luck, forgetting that the poor girl must have met with much ill luck, in order to be in the situation in which she was actually placed.

Nothing occurred on the passage from St. Helena to New York, worthy of being specially recorded. It was rather long, but I cannot say it was unpleasant. At

length our reckoning told us to look out for land. The major and Emily were on deck, all expectation, and ere long we heard the welcome cry. A hazy cloud was just visible on our lee-bow. It grew more and more dense and distinct, until it showed the hues and furrows of a mountain-side. The low point of the Hook, and the higher land beyond, then came in view. We glided past the land, doubled the Spit, and got into the upper bay, just an hour before the sun of a beautiful day in June was setting. This was in the year of our Lord 1802.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Drink! drink! to whom shall we drink?
To a friend or a mistress?—Come, let me think!
To those who are absent, or those who are here?
To the dead that we loved, or the living still dear?
Alas! when I look I find none of the last!
The present is barren—let's drink to the past."
—PAULDING.

THOUGH strictly a Manhattanese as a sailor, I shall not run into rhapsody on the subject of the beauties of the inner or outer bay of this prosperous place. No man but one besotted with provincial conceit could ever think of comparing the harbor of New York with the Bay of Naples; nor do I know two places, that have the same great elements of land and water, that are less alike. The harbor of New York is barely pretty—not a particle more, if quite as much, while the Bay of Naples is almost what its owners so fondly term it, "a little bit of heaven fallen upon earth." On the other hand, however, Naples, as a haven, is not to be mentioned in the same breath with the great American mart, which, *as a port*, has no competitor within the circle of my knowledge, Constantinople alone excepted. I wish my semi-townsmen, the Manhattanese, could be persuaded of these facts, as, when they *do* brag, as the wisest of mortals sometimes will, they might brag of their strong, and not of their weak points, as is now too often the case.

The Major, Emily, and myself stood on the poop, regarding the scene, as the ship glided onward, before a good southeast breeze. I watched the countenance of my companions with interest, for I had the nervousness of a tyro and a provincial on the subject of the opinions of the people of other lands concerning everything that affected my own. I could see that the major was not particularly struck; and I was disappointed, *then*, whatever may be my opinion now. Emily better answered my hopes. Whether the charming girl really felt the vast contrast between a view of the unbroken expanse of the ocean, and the scene before her, or was disposed to please her host, she did not hesitate to express delight. I let her understand how much I was gratified; and thus our long, long voyage, and that, so far as degrees of longitude were concerned, nearly embraced the circuit of the earth, may be said to have terminated with the kindest feeling.

The ship was off Bedloe's, and the pilot had begun to shorten sail. when a schooner crossed our fore-foot, beating down. I had been too much occupied with the general movement of the bay, to notice one small craft; but, this vessel happening to tack quite near us, I could not but turn my eyes in her direction. At that instant I heard a shout from Neb, who was furling one of the royals. It was one of those irrepressible "nigger gollies" that often escaped from the fellow involuntarily.

"What do you mean by that uproar, on the mizzenroyal-yard," I called out angrily—for the *style* of my ship had now become an object of concern with me. "Keep silence, sir, or I'll find a way to instruct you in the art."

"Lord! masser Mile"—cried the negro, pointing eagerly toward the schooner—"there go *Pretty Poll.*"

It was our old craft, sure enough, and I hailed her incontinently.

"*Pretty Polly*, ahoy!"

"Halloo!"

"Where are you bound, sir; and when did that schooner get in from the Pacific?"

"We are bound to Martinique—the *Poll* got home from the South Seas about six

months since. This is her third voyage to the West Indies since."

Here then was the certainty that the cargo sent home, and the letter with it, were all safe. I must be expected, and the owners would soon hear of my arrival. We were not kept long in doubt; for, as the ship entered the Hudson, a boat approached, and in her were two of the principal members of our firm. I had seen them, and that is all; but my own letters, and the report of the officer who brought home the schooner, had told them all about me. Could Nelson, after his victory of the Nile, have walked into the King of England's private cabinet with the news of his own success, his reception would not have been more flattering than that I now received. I was "Captain Wallingforded" at every sentence; and commendations were so intermixed with inquiries about the value of the cargo, that I did not know which to answer first. I was invited to dine the very next day by both the gentlemen in the same breath; and when I raised some objections connected with the duty of the ship, the invitations were extended from day to day, for a week. So very welcome is he who brings us gold!

We went alongside of a North River wharf, and had everything secure just as the sun was setting. The people were then allowed to go ashore for the night. Not a soul of them asked for a dollar, but the men walked up the wharf attended by a circle of admiring landlords, that put them all above want. The sailor who has three years' pay under his lee is a sort of Rothschild on Jack's Exchange. All the harpies about our lads knew that the *Crisis* and her teas, etc., were hypothecated to meet their own ten and twenty dollar advances.

I dressed myself hurriedly, and ordered Neb to imitate my example. One of the owners had kindly volunteered to see Major Merton and Emily to a suitable residence, with an alacrity that surprised me. But the influence of England and Englishmen, in all America, was exceedingly great forty years since. This was still more true in New York than in the country generally, and a half-pay English major was a species of nobleman among the better sort of Manhattanese of that day. How many of these *quasi* lords have I seen, whose patents of nobility were merely the commissions of captains and lieutenants signed by the majesty of England! In that day—it is nonsense to deny it—the man who had served *against* the country, provided he was a "British officer," was a better man than he who had served in our own ranks. This was true, however, only as regarded *society;* the ballot-boxes, and the *people,* giving very different indications of their sentiments on such subjects. Nor is this result, so far as New York was concerned, as surprising as at first sight it may possibly appear. Viewed as a class, the gentry of New York took sides with the crown. It is true, that the portion of this gentry which might almost be called *baronial*—it was strictly *manorial*—was pretty equally divided, carrying with them their collaterals; but the larger portion of this entire class of the *élite* of society took sides with the crown, and the peace of 1783 found no small part of them in possession of their old social stations, the confiscations affecting few beyond the most important and the richest of the delinquents. I can give an instance within my own immediate knowledge of the sort of justice of these confiscations.

The head of one of the most important of all the colonial families was a man of indolent habits, and was much indisposed to any active pursuits. This gentleman was enormously rich, and his estates were confiscated and sold. Now this attained traitor had a younger brother who was actually serving in the British army in America, his regiment sharing in the battles of Bunker Hill, Brandywine, Monmouth, etc. But the major was a younger son, and in virtue of that republican merit, he escaped the consequences of his adhesion to the service of the crown, and after the Revolution the cadet returned to his native country, took quiet possession of a property of no inconsiderable amount; while his senior passed his days in exile, paying the bitter penalty of being rich in a revo-

lution. It was a consequence of the peculiarities first mentioned, that the Manhattanese society set so high a value on English connection. They still admired, as the provincial only can admire, and they worshipped, as the provincials worship; or, at a safe distance. The strange medley of truth, cant, selfishness, sophistry, and good faith, that founded political hostility to the movements of the French Revolution, had as ardent believers in this country as it had in England itself; and this contributed to sustain the sort of feeling I have described. Of the fact there can be no doubt, as any one will testify who knew New York society forty years ago.

No wonder, then, that Major Merton and Emily fared well on their sudden arrival in the country. Some romance, moreover, was attached to their adventures; and I had no great reason to give myself any anxiety on their account. There was little doubt of their soon being much more at home than I could hope to be, though in my native land.

Neb soon reported himself ready for shore-duty, and I ordered him to follow me. It was my intention to proceed to the counting-house of the owners to receive some letters that awaited me, and after writing short answers, to dispatch the black at once to Clawbonny with the intelligence of my return. In 1802, the Battery was the court-end of the town, and it was a good deal frequented by the better classes, particularly at the hour at which I was now about to cross it. I have never returned from a voyage, especially to Europe, without being particularly struck with two things in the great Western Emporium—since the common councils and the editors insist on the word—viz., the provincial appearance of everything that meets the eye, and the beauty of the younger females; meaning, however, by the last, the true, native portion of the population, and not the throng from Ireland and Germany who now crowd the streets, and who, certainly, as a body, are not in the least remarkable for personal charms. But an American can tell an American man or woman as soon as he lays eyes on either; and there were few besides native girls on the Battery at the time of which I am writing. As there were many children taking their evening walk, and black servants were far more common than now, Neb had his share of delights, too, and I heard him exclaim "Golly!" twice, before we reached the center of the Battery. This exclamation escaped him on passing as many sable Venuses, each of whom bridled up at the fellow's admiration, and, doubtless was as much offended as the sex is apt to be on such occasions.

I must have passed twenty young women that evening, either of whom would induce a youth to turn around and look again; and, for the moment, I forgot my errand. Neither Neb nor I was in any hurry. We were strolling along, in this manner, gazing right and left, when a party approached, under the trees, that drew all my attention to itself. In front walked a young man and young woman, who were dressed simply, but with a taste that denoted persons of better class. The former was remarkable for nothing, unless it might be a rattling vivacity, of which large doses were administered to his fair companion, who, seemingly, swallowed it less reluctantly than doses of another sort are so often received. At least, I thought so while the two were at a distance, by the beautiful glistening teeth that were shining like my own spotless pearls, between lips of coral. The air, beauty, figure, and, indeed, all connected with this singularly lovely young creature, struck my imagination at once. It was not so much her beauty, though that was decided and attractive, as the admixture of feminine delicacy with blooming health; the walk, so natural, and yet so full of lightness and grace; the laugh, so joyous, and still so quiet and suited to her sex; and the entire air and manner, which denoted equally buoyant health and happiness, the gracefulness of one who thought not of herself, and the refinement which is quite as much the gift of native sentiment as the fruit of art and association. I could not tell what her companion was saying; but as they approached, I fancied

them acknowledged lovers, on whom fortune, friends, and circumstances smiled alike. A glance aside told me that even Neb was struck by the being before him, and that he had ceased looking at the sable Venuses, to gaze at this.

I could not keep my gaze off the face of this lovely creature, who did not let me get a good look of her dark-blue eyes, however, until I was quite near, when they were naturally turned toward the form that approached. For a few seconds, while in the very act of passing, we looked intently at each other, and the charm said to be possessed by certain animals, was not more powerful than was our mutual gaze. In this manner we had actually passed each other, and I was still in a sort of mystified trance, when I heard suddenly, in a voice and tone that caused every nerve to thrill within me, the single word—

"Miles!"

Turning, and taking another look, it was impossible any longer to mistake. Lucy Hardinge stood before me, trembling, uncertain, her face now pale as death, now flushed to scarlet, her hands clasped, her look doubting, eager, shrinking, equally denoting hope and fear, and all so blended as to render her the most perfect picture of female truth, feeling, diffidence, and natural modesty I had ever beheld.

"Lucy, is it—*can* it be possible? It is, then, *you*, I thought so gloriously beautiful, and that without knowing you, too?"

I take it for granted, had I studied a week, I should not have composed a more grateful salutation than this, which burst forth in a way that set all the usual restraints of manners at defiance. Of course, I felt bound to go through with the matter as prosperously as I had commenced, and in spite of the publicity of the place, in spite of half a dozen persons, who heard what passed, and had turned, smiling, to see what would come next; in spite of the grave-looking gentleman who had so lately been all vivacity and gayety, I advanced, folded the dear girl to my heart, and gave her such a kiss as I'll take upon myself to say, *she* had never before received. Sailors, usually, do not perform such things by halves, and I never was more in earnest in my life. Such a salutation, from a young fellow who stood rather more than six feet in his stockings, had a pair of whiskers that had come all the way from the Pacific with very little trimming, and who possessed a manliness about him of which mere walking up and down Broadway would have robbed a young Hercules, had the effect to cover poor Lucy with blushes and confusion.

"There—that will do, Miles," she said, struggling to get free; "a truce, I pray you. See, yonder are Grace, and my father, and Rupert."

There they were, sure enough, the whole family having come out, to take a walk, in company with a certain Mr. Andrew Drewett, a young gentleman who was a fellow-student of Rupert's, and who, as I afterwards ascertained, was a pretty open admirer of Rupert's sister. There was a marked difference in the manner in which I was received by Grace and Lucy. The first exclaimed "Miles!" precisely as the last had exclaimed; her color heightened, and tears forced themselves into her eyes, but she could not be said to blush. Instead of first manifesting an eagerness to meet my salute, and then shrinking sensitively from it, she flung her delicate arms round my neck, without the slightest reserve, both arms, too, kissed me six or eight times without stopping, and then began to sob, as if her heart would break. The spectators, who saw in all this the plain, honest, natural, undisguised affection of a sister, had the good taste to walk on, though I could see that their countenances sympathized with so happy a family meeting. I had but a moment to press Grace to my heart, before Mr. Hardinge's voice drew my attention to him.

The good old man forgot that I was two inches taller than he was himself: that I could, with ease, have lifted him from the earth, and carried him in my arms, as if he were an infant; that I was bronzed by a long voyage, and had Pacific Ocean whiskers; for he caressed me as if

I had been a child, kissed me quite as often as Grace had done, blessed me aloud, and then gave way to his tears, as freely as both the girls. But for this burst of feeling on the part of a gray-headed old clergyman, I am afraid our scene would not altogether have escaped ridicule. As it was, however, this saved us. Clergymen were far more respected in America forty years ago than they are to-day, though I think they have still as much consideration here as in most other countries; and the general respect felt for the class would have insured us from any manifestations of the sort, without the nature and emotion which came in its aid. As for myself, I was glad to take refuge in Rupert's hearty but less sentimental shake of the hand. After this, we all sought a seat, in a less public spot, and were soon sufficiently composed to converse. As for the gentleman named Drewett, he waited long enough to inquire of Lucy who I was, and then he had sufficient tact to wish us all good evening. I overheard the little dialogue which produced this explanation.

"A close friend, if not a near relation, Miss Hardinge?" he observed, inquiringly.

"Oh, yes," answered the smiling, weeping girl, with the undisguised truth of her honest nature, "both friend and relative."

"May I presume to ask the name?"

"The name, Mr. Drewett! Why, it is Miles—dear Miles—you surely have heard us speak of Miles—but I forget; you never were at Clawbonny. Is it not a most joyful surprise, dearest, dearest Grace?"

Mr. Andrew Drewett waited, I thought, with most commendable patience for Grace to squeeze Lucy's hand, and to murmur her own felicitations when he ventured to add—

"You were about to say something, Miss Hardinge?"

"Was I—I declare I have forgotten what it was. Such a surprise—such a joyful, blessed surprise—I beg pardon, Mr. Drewett—ah! I remember now; I was about to say that this is Mr. Miles Wallingford, of Clawbonny, the gentleman who is my father's ward—Grace's brother, you know."

"And how related to yourself, Miss Hardinge?" the gentleman continued, a little perseveringly.

"To me! Oh! very, very near—that is—I forget so much this evening—why, not at all."

It was at this moment Mr. Drewett saw fit to make his parting salutations with studied decorum, and to take his leave in a manner so polite that, though tempted, I could not, just at the moment, stop the current of my feelings to admire. No one seemed to miss him, however, and we five, who remained, were soon seated in the spot I have mentioned, and as much abstracted from the scene around us as if we had been on the rustic bench under the old elm on the lawn—if I dare use so fine a word for so unpretending a place—at Clawbonny. I had my station between Mr. Hardinge and Grace, while Lucy sat next her father, and Rupert next to my sister. My friend could see me, without difficulty, owing to his stature, while I saw the glistening eyes of Lucy, riveted on my face, as, leaning on her father's knee, she bent her graceful form forward, in absorbed attention.

"We expected you; we have not been taken *altogether* by surprise!" exclaimed good Mr. Hardinge, clapping his hand on my shoulder, as if to say he could now begin to treat me like a man. "I consented to come down, just at this moment, because the last Canton ship that arrived brought the intelligence that the *Crisis* was to sail in ten days."

"And you may judge of our surprise," said Rupert, "when we read the report in the papers, 'The *Crisis*, *Captain Wallingford.*'"

"I suppose my letters from the island had prepared you for this," I observed.

"In them, you spoke of Mr. Marble, and I naturally concluded, when it came to the pinch, the man would resume the command, and bring the ship home. Duty to the owners would be apt to induce him."

"He did not," I answered, a little proudly perhaps, forgetting poor Marble's

probable situation for an instant, in my own vanity. "Mr. Marble understood well, that if I knew nothing else, I knew how to take care of a ship."

"So it seems, my dear boy, indeed, so it doth seem!" said Mr. Hardinge, kindly. "I hear from all quarters your conduct commended; and the recovery of the vessel from the French was really worthy of Truxtun himself."

At that day, Truxtun was the great gun of American naval idolatry, and had as much local reputation as Nelson himself enjoyed in England. The allusion was a sore assault on my modesty; but I got along with it, as well as I could.

"I endeavored to do my duty, sir," I answered, trying not to look at Lucy, and seem meek; "and it would have been a terrible disgrace to have come home, and been obliged to say the French got the ship from us when we were all asleep."

"But you took a ship from the French, in that manner, and kept her too!" said a soft voice, every intonation of which was music to me.

I looked round and saw the speaking eyes of Lucy, just clear of the gray coat of her father, behind which she instinctively shrank the instant she caught my glance.

"Yes," I answered, "we did something of that sort, and were a little more fortunate than our enemies. But, you will recollect, we were much favored by the complaisance of poor Monsieur Le Compte, in leaving us a schooner to work our mischief in."

"I have always thought that part of your story, Miles, a little extraordinary," observed Mr. Hardinge; "though I suppose this Frenchman's liberality was, in some measure, a matter of necessity, out there, in the middle of the Pacific."

"I hardly think you do Captain Le Compte justice, sir. He was a chivalrous fellow, and every way a gallant seaman. It is possible, he was rather more in a hurry than he might have been, but for his passengers—that is all—at least, I have always suspected that the wish to have Miss Merton all to himself induced him to get rid of us as soon as possible. He evidently admired her, and could have been jealous of a dead-eye."

"Miss Merton!" exclaimed Grace. "Jealous!"

"Miss Merton!" put in Rupert, leaning forward curiously.

"Miss Merton! And jealous of dead-eyes, and wishing to get rid of us!" said Mr. Hardinge, smiling. "Pray who is Miss Merton? and who are the *us?* and who are the dead-eyes?"

Lucy was silent.

"Why, sir, I thought I wrote you all about the Mertons. How we met them in London, and then found them prisoners to Monsieur Le Compte, and that I intended to carry them to Canton in the *Crisis?*"

"You told us some of this, certainly; but though you may have written 'all about' a *Major* Merton, you forgot to tell us 'about *all*' the Mertons. This is the first syllable I have ever had about a *Miss* Merton. How is it, girls—did Miles speak of any one but the Major in his letters?"

"Not a syllable to me, sir, of any young lady, I can assure you," replied Grace, laughing. "How was it to you, Lucy?"

"Of course he would not tell me that which he thought fit to conceal from his own sister," said Lucy, in a low voice.

"It is odd I should have forgotten to mention her," I cried, endeavoring to laugh it off. "Young men do not often forget to write about young ladies."

"This Miss Merton is young, then, brother?"

"About your own age, Grace."

"And handsome—and agreeable—and accomplished?"

"Something like yourself, my dear."

"But handsome, I take it for granted, Miles," observed Mr. Hardinge, "by the manner in which you have omitted to speak of her charms, in your letters!"

"Why, sir, I think most persons, that is the world in general, I mean such as are not overfastidious, would consider Miss Merton particularly handsome; agreeable in person and features, I would be understood to say."

"Oh! you are sufficiently explicit; everybody can understand you," added my laughing guardian, who had no more

thought of getting me married to his own daughter than to a German princess of a hundred and forty-five quarterings, if there are any such things; "some other time we will have the particulars of her eyes, hair, teeth, etc., etc."

"Oh! sir, you may save me the trouble by looking at her yourself, to-morrow, since she and her father are both here."

"*Here!*" exclaimed all four in a breath; Lucy's extreme surprise extorting the monosyllable from her reserve even a little louder than from the rest.

"Certainly, here; father, daughter and servants. I dare say I omitted to speak of the servants in my letters, too, but a poor fellow who has a great deal to do cannot think of everything in a minute. Major Merton has a touch of the liver-complaint, and it would not do to leave him in a warm climate. So, no other chance offering, he is proceeding to England, by the way of America."

"And how long had you these people on board your ship, Miles?" Grace asked, a little gravely.

"Actually on board with myself, about nine months, I should think; but including the time in London, at Canton and on the island, I should call our acquaintance one of rather more than a year's standing."

"Long enough, certainly, to make a young lady sufficiently obvious to a young gentleman's memory, not to be forgotten in his letters."

After this pointed speech there was a silence, which Mr. Hardinge broke by some questions about the passage home from Canton. As it was getting cool on the Battery, however, we all moved away, proceeding to Mrs. Bradfort's. This lady, as I afterward discovered, was much attached to Lucy, and had insisted on giving her these opportunities of seeing the world. She was quite at her ease in her circumstances, and belonged to a circle a good deal superior to that into which Grace and myself could have claimed admission in right of our own social position. Lucy had been well received as her relative, and as a clergyman's daughter, and Grace on her own account, as I afterward learned. It would be attaching too much credit to Clawbonny to say that either of the girls had not improved by this association, though it was scarcely possible to make Grace more feminine and lady-like than she had been made by Nature. The effect on Lucy was simply to put a little reserve on her native frankness and sturdy honesty; though candor compels me to say, that mingling with the world, and especially the world to which they had been introduced by Mrs. Bradfort, had certainly increased the native charm of manner that each possessed. I began to think Emily Merton, so far from possessing any advantage over the two girls, might now improve a little herself by associating with them.

At the house, I had to tell my whole story, and to answer a multitude of questions. Not a syllable more was said about Miss Merton; and even Lucy had smiles to bestow and remarks to make, as before. When we got to the lights where the girls could remove their shawls and hats, I made each of them stand before me, in order to ascertain how much time had altered them. Grace was now nineteen; and Lucy was only six months her junior. The greatest change was in the latter. Her form had ripened into something as near as possible to girlish perfection. In this respect she had the advantage of Grace, who was a little too slight and delicate; whereas Lucy, without any of the heaviness that so often accompanies a truly rounded person, and which was perhaps a slight defect in Emily Merton's figure, was without an angle of any sort, in her entire outline. Grace, always so handsome, and so intellectual in the expression of her countenance, had improved less in this respect than Lucy, whose eyes had obtained a tenderness and feeling that rendered them, to me, even more attractive than those of my own dear sister. In a word, any man might have been proud at finding two such admirable creatures interested in him, as interested, every look, smile, syllable, and gesture of these girls, denoted they were in me.

All this time, Neb had been overlooked. He had followed us to the house, how-

ever, and was already engaged in a dark-colored flirtation with a certain Miss Chloe Clawbonny, his own second cousin, in the kitchen; a lady who had attracted a portion of his admiration before we sailed, and who had accompanied her young mistress to town. As soon as it was ascertained the fellow was below, Lucy, who was quite at home in her kinswoman's house, insisted on his being introduced. I saw by the indulgent smile of Mrs. Bradfort, that Lucy was not exceeding her conceded privileges, and Neb was ordered up, forthwith. Never was there a happier fellow than this "nigger" appeared to be, on that occasion. He kept rolling his tarpaulin between his fingers, shifting his weight from leg to leg, and otherwise betraying the confusion of one questioned by his betters; for, in that day, a *negro* was ready enough to allow he had his betters, and did not feel he was injured in so doing. At the present time, I am well aware that the word is proscribed even in the State's Prisons; everybody being just as good as everybody else; though some have the misfortune to be sentenced to hard labor, while others are permitted to go at large. As a matter of course, the selections made through the ballot-boxes only go to prove that "one man is as good as another."

Our party did not separate until quite late. Suppers were eaten in 1802; and I was invited to sit down with the rest of the family, and a gay set we were. It was then the fashion to drink toasts; gentlemen giving ladies, and ladies gentlemen. The usage was singular, but very general; more especially in the better sort of houses. We men drank our wine, as a matter of course; while the ladies sipped theirs, in that pretty manner in which females moisten their lips on such occasions. After a time, Mrs. Bradfort, who was very particular in the observance of forms, gayly called on Mr. Hardinge for his toast.

"My dear Mrs. Bradfort," said the divine, good-humoredly, "if it were not in your own house, and contrary to all rule to give a person who is present, I certainly should drink to yourself. Bless me, bless me, whom shall I give? I suppose I shall not be permitted to give our new bishop, Dr. Moore?."

The cry of "No bishop!" was even more unanimous that it is at this moment, among those who, having all their lives dissented from episcopal authority, fancy it an evidence of an increasing influence to join in a clamor made by their own voices; and this, moreover, on a subject that not one in a hundred among them has given himself the trouble even to skim. Our opposition—in which Mrs. Bradfort joined, by the way—was of a very different nature, however; proceeding from a desire to learn what lady Mr. Hardinge could possibly select, at such a moment. I never saw the old gentleman so confused before. He laughed, tried to dodge the appeal, fidgeted, and at last fairly blushed. All this proceeded, not from any preference for any particular individual of the sex, but from natural diffidence, the perfect simplicity and nature of his character, which caused him to be abashed at even appearing to select a female for a toast. It was a beautiful picture of masculine truth and purity! Still, we would not be put off; and the old gentleman, composing his countenance five or six times in vain efforts to reflect, then looking as grave as if about to proceed to prayer, raised his glass, and said—

"Peggy Perott!"

A general laugh succeeded this announcement, Peggy Perott being an old maid who went about tending the sick for hire, in the vicinity of Clawbonny, and known to us all as the ugliest woman in the country.

"Why do you first insist on my giving a toast, and then laugh at it when given?" cried Mr. Hardinge, half amused, half serious in his expostulations. "Peggy is an excellent woman, and one of the most useful I know."

"I wonder, my dear sir, you did not think of adding a sentiment!" cried I, a little pertly.

"And if I had, it would have been such a one as no woman need be ashamed to hear attached to her name. But enough of this; I have given Peggy Perott, and

you are bound to drink her,"—that we had done already, "and now, cousin, as I have passed through the fiery furnace—"

"Unscathed?" demanded Lucy, laughing ready to kill herself.

"Yes, unscathed, miss: and now, cousin, I ask of you to honor us with a toast."

Mrs. Bradfort had been a widow many years, and was fortified with the panoply of her state. Accustomed to such appeals, which, when she was young and handsome, had been of much more frequent occurrence than of late, she held her glass for the wine with perfect self-possession, and gave her toast with the conscious dignity of one who had often been solicited in vain "to change her condition."

"I will give you," she said, raising her person and her voice, as if to invite scrutiny, "my dear old friend, good Dr. Wilson."

It was incumbent on a single person to give another who was also single; and the widow had been true to the usage; but "good Dr. Wilson" was a half superannuated clergyman, whom no one *could* suspect of inspiring anything beyond friendship.

"Dear me—dear me!" cried Mr. Hardinge, earnestly; "how much more thoughtful, Mrs. Bradfort, you are than myself! Had I thought a moment, *I* might have given the Doctor; for I studied with him, and honor him vastly."

This touch of simplicity produced another laugh—how easily we all laughed that night!—and it caused a little more confusion in the excellent divine. Mrs. Bradfort then called on me, as was her right; but I begged that Rupert might precede me, he knowing more persons, and being now a sort of man of the world.

"I will give the charming Miss Winthrop," said Rupert, without a moment's hesitation, tossing off his glass with an air that said, "how do you like *that?*"

As Winthrop was a highly respectable name, it denoted the set in which Rupert moved; and as for the young lady, I dare say she merited his eulogium, though I never happened to see her. It was something, however, in 1802, for a youngster to dare to toast a Winthrop, or a Morris, or a Livingston, or a De Lancey, or a Stuyvesant, or a Beekman, or a Van Rensselaer, or a Schuyler, or a Rutherford, or a Bayard, or a Watts, or a Van Cortlandt, or a Verplanck, or a Jones, or a Walton, or any of that set. They, and twenty similar families, composed the remnant of the colonial aristocracy, and still made head, within the limits of Manhattan, against the inroads of the Van—something elses. Alas! alas! how changed is all this, though I am obliged to believe it is all for the best.

"Do *you* know Miss Winthrop?" I asked of Grace, in a whisper.

"Not at all; I am not much in that set," she answered, quietly. "Rupert and Lucy have been noticed by many persons whom I do not know."

This was the first intimation I got that my sister did not possess all the advantages in society that were enjoyed by her friend. As is always the case where it is believed to be our *loss*, I felt indignant at first; had it been the reverse, I dare say I should have fancied it all very right. Consequences grew out of these distinctions which I could not then foresee, but which will be related in their place. Rupert now called on Grace for her toast, a lady commonly succeeding a gentleman. My sister did not seem in the least disconcerted: but, after a moment's hesitation, she said—

"Mr. Edward Marston."

This was a strange name to me, but I afterward ascertained it belonged to a respectable young man who visited Mrs. Bradfort's, and who stood very well with all his acquaintances. I looked at Rupert, to note the effect; but Rupert was as calm as Grace herself had been when he gave Miss Winthrop.

"I believe I have no one to call upon but you, Miles," said Grace, smiling.

"Me! Why, you all know I am not acquainted with a soul. Our Ulster County girls have almost gone out of my recollection; besides, no one would know them here, should I mention twenty."

"You strangely forget, brother, that

most of us are Ulster County folk. Try if you can recall no young lady—"

"Oh! easily enough, for that matter; a young fellow can hardly have lived nine months in the same cabin with Emily, and not think of her when hard pushed; I will give you Miss Emily Merton."

The toast was drunk, and I thought Mr. Hardinge looked thoughtful, like one who had a guardian's cares, and that Grace was even grave. I did not dare look at Lucy, though I could have toasted her all night, had it been in rule to drink a person who was present. We began to chat again, and I had answered some eight or ten questions, when Mrs. Bradfort, much too precise to make any omissions, reminded us that we had not yet been honored with Miss Lucy Hardinge's toast. Lucy had enjoyed plenty of time to reflect; and she bowed, paused a moment as if to summon resolution, and then mentioned—

"Mr. Andrew Drewett."

So, then, Lucy Hardinge toasted this Mr. Drewett—the very youth with whom she had been in such animated discourse when I first met the party! Had I been more familiar with the world, I should have thought nothing of a thing that was so common; or, did I understand human nature better, I might have known that no sensitive and delicate woman would betray a secret that was dear to her, under so idle a form. But I was young, and ready myself to toast the girl I preferred before the universe; and I could not make suitable allowances for difference of sex and temperament. Lucy's toast made me very uncomfortable for the rest of the evening; and I was not sorry when Rupert reminded me that it was eleven, and that he would go with me to a tavern, in order to look for a room.

The next morning was passed in transacting the business of the ship. I found myself much noticed among the merchants and ship-masters; and one of my owners took me on 'Change, that I might see and be seen. As the papers had spoken of the recapture of the *Crisis*, on the arrival of the *Pretty Poll*, and had now each an article on the arrival of the ship, I had every reason to be satisfied with my reception.

There are men so strong in principle, as well as intellect, I do suppose, that they can be content with the approbation of their own consciences, and who can smile at the praises or censure of the world alike; but I confess to a strong sympathy with the commendation of my fellow-creatures, and as strong a distate for their disapprobation. I know this is not the way to make a great man; for he who cannot judge, feel, and act for himself, will always be in danger of making undue sacrifices to the wishes of others; but you can have no more of a cat than the skin: and I was sufficiently proud at finding myself a miniature hero, about the lower end of Wall Street and in the columns of the newspapers. As for these last, no one can complain of their zeal in extolling everything national. To believe them, the country never was wrong, or defeated, or in a condition to be defeated, except when a political opponent could be made to suffer by an opposite theory; and then nothing was ever right. As to fame, I have since discovered they consider that of each individual to be public property, in which each American has a part and parcel, the editors, themselves, more than the man who has thrown the article into the common lot. But I was young in 1802, and even a paragraph in my praise in a newspaper had a certain charm for me, that I will not deny. Then I *had* done well, as even my enemies, if I had any, must have admitted.

CHAPTER XXII.

"Ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves—I mean pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks; the man is, notwithstanding, sufficient;—three thousand ducats;—I think I may take his bond."—SHYLOCK.

I SAW Grace, and Lucy, and Rupert, and good Mr. Hardinge every day, but I could not find time to call on the Mertons until near the close of a week. I then paid them a visit, and found them glad to see me, but not at all in want of my at-

tentions to make them comfortable. The major had exhibited his claims to the British consul, who happened to be a native Manhattanese, and was well-connected, a circumstance that then gave him an influence in society that his commission alone would not have conferred. Colonel Barclay, for so was this gentleman called, had taken the Mertons by the hand as a matter of course, and his example being followed by others, I found that they were already in the best circle of the place. Emily mentioned to me the names of several of those with whom she had exchanged visits, and I knew at once, through Lucy's and Grace's conversation, and from my own general knowledge of the traditions of the colony and State, that they were among the leading people of the land, socially if not politically; a class altogether above any with whom I had myself ever associated. Now I knew that the master of a merchantman, whatever might be his standing with his owner or consignee, or the credit he had gained among his fellows, was not likely to get admission into this set; and there was the comfortable prospect before me of having my own sister and the two other girls I admired most and loved best in the world—next to Grace, of course—visiting round in houses of which the doors were shut against myself. This is always unpleasant, but in my case it turned out to be more.

When I told Emily that Grace and Lucy were in town, and intended coming to see her that very morning, I thought she manifested less curiosity than would have been the case a month before.

"Is Miss Hardinge a relative of Mr. Rupert Hardinge, the gentleman to whom I was introduced at dinner, yesterday?" she demanded, after expressing the pleasure it would give her to see the ladies.

I knew that Rupert had dined out the day before, and there being no one else of the same name, I answered in the affirmative.

"He is the son of a respectable clergyman, and of very good connections, I hear."

"The Hardinges are so considered among us; both Rupert's father and grandfather were clergymen, and his great-grandfather was a seaman—I trust you will think none the worse of him for that."

"A sailor! I had supposed, from what some of those present said—that is, I did not know it."

"Perhaps they told you that his great-grandfather was a *British officer?*"

Emily colored, and then she laughed faintly, admitting, however, that I had guessed right.

"Well, all this was true," I added, "though he was a sailor. Old Captain Hardinge—or Commodore Hardinge, as he used to be called, for he once commanded a squadron—was in the English navy."

"Oh! that sort of a sailor!" cried Emily, quickly. "I did not know that it was usual to call gentlemen in the navy seamen."

"They would make a poor figure if they were not, Miss Merton; you might as well say that a judge is no lawyer."

This was enough, however, to satisfy me that Miss Merton no longer considered the master of the *Crisis* the first man in the world.

A ring announced the arrival of the two girls. They were shown up, and I soon had the satisfaction of seeing these three charming young women together. Emily received her two guests very courteously, and was frank, nay warm, in the expression of her gratitude for all that I had done for herself and her father. She even went back so far as to speak of the occurrence in the park, at London, and was gracious enough to declare that she and her parents owed their lives to my interference. All this gave her listeners great pleasure, for I believe neither ever tired of hearing my praises. After this opening, the conversation turned on New York, its gayeties, and the different persons known to them mutually. I saw that the two girls were struck with the set Miss Merton was in, which was a shade superior even to that of Mrs. Bradfort's, though the fusion which usually accompanies that sort of thing brought portions of each cir-

cle within the knowledge of the other. As the persons named were utter strangers to me, I had nothing to say, and sat listening in silence. The opportunity was improved by comparing the girls with each other.

In delicacy of appearance, Grace and Lucy each had the advantage of the English beauty. Their hands and feet were smaller, their waists finer, and their *tournures*, generally, I thought the most pleasing. Emily had the advantage in complexion, though her color had less fineness and delicacy. Perhaps her teeth were the most brilliant; though Grace and Lucy, particularly the latter, had very fine teeth. The English girl's shoulders and bust, generally, would have been more admired than those of most American—particularly than most New York—girls; but it was not possible to surpass those of Lucy. As a whole, Emily's countenance had the most spirit, Lucy's the most fineness and feeling. I make no comparison with the expression of Grace's countenance, which was altogether too remarkable for its intellectual character to be included in anything like a national classification. I remember I thought, as they sat there in a row conversing frankly and cheerfully together, Lucy the handsomest in her pretty neat morning dress; while I had my doubts whether Emily would not have extorted the most applause in a ball room. This distinction is mentioned, because I believe it national.

The visit lasted an hour; for I had expressed a wish to all parties that they would become acquainted, and the girls seemed mutually pleased. As they chatted, I listened to the tones of their voices, and fancied, on the whole, that Emily had slightly the advantage in intonation and accent; though it was scarcely perceptible, and it was an advantage that was attended by a slight sacrifice of the charm of natural utterance. She was a little more artificial in this respect than her companions, and insomuch less pleasing; though, had the comparison been made with the Manhattan *style* of the present day, the odds would have been immensely in her favor. In 1802, however, some attention was still paid to the utterance, tones of voice, and manner of speaking of young ladies. The want of it all, just now, is the besetting vice of the whole of our later instruction of the sex; it being almost as rare a thing nowadays to find a young American girl who speaks her own language gracefully, as it is to find one who is not of pleasing person.

When the young ladies parted, it was with an understanding that they were soon to meet again. I shook hands with Emily, English fashion, and took my leave at the same time.

"Well, Miles," said Grace, as soon as we were in the street, "you have certainly been of service to a very charming young woman—I like her, excessively."

"And you, Lucy—I hope you agree with Grace, in thinking my friend, Emily Merton, a charming young woman."

Lucy did not speak as frankly, or as decidedly as Grace, so far as manner was concerned; though she coincided in words.

"I am of the same opinion," she said, in a tone that was far less cheerful than her usually very cheerful manner. "She is one of the loveliest creatures I ever saw—and it is no wonder—"

"What is no wonder, dear?" asked Grace, observing that her friend hesitated to proceed.

"Oh! I was about to say something silly, and had better not finish the speech. But what a finished manner Miss Merton possesses; do you not think so, Grace?"

"I wish she had a little less of it, dear; that is precisely what I should find fault with in her deportment. It *is* manner, and, though we all must have some, it strikes me it ought not to be seen. I think all the Europeans we saw in town, last winter, Lucy, had more or less of this manner."

"I dare say it would seem so to *us*; notwithstanding, it may be very agreeable to those who are used to it—a thing to miss, when one gets much accustomed to it."

As Lucy made this remark, I detected a furtive and timid glance at myself. I was mystified at the time, and was actually so silly as to think the dear girl was

talking at me, and to feel a little resentment. I fancied she wished to say, "There, Master Miles, you have been in London, and on a desert island in the South Seas—the very extremes of human habits—and have got to be so sophisticated, so very un-Clawbonnyish, as to feel the necessity of a *manner*, in the young ladies with whom you associate." The notion nettled me to a degree that induced me to pretend duty, and to hurry down to the ship. Whom should I meet, in Rector Street, but Mr. Hardinge, who had been across to the Hudson in search of me.

"Come hither, Miles," said the excellent old man, "I wish to converse with you seriously."

As Lucy was uppermost in my thoughts at the moment, I said to myself—"What can the dear old gentleman have to say, now?"

"I hear from all quarters the best accounts of you, my dear boy," Mr. Hardinge continued, "and I am told you make a very superior seaman. It is a feather in your cap, indeed, to have commanded an Indiaman a twelvemonth before you are of age. I have been conversing with my old friend John Murray, of the house of John Murray & Sons, one of the very best merchants in America, and he says 'push the boy ahead when you find the right stuff in him. Get him a ship of his own, and that will put him on the true track. Teach him early to have an eye to his own interests, and it will make a man of him at once.' I have thought the matter over, have had a vessel in my eye, for the last month, and will purchase her at once, if you like the plan."

"But have I money enough for such a thing, my dear sir—after having sailed in the *John*, and the *Tigris*, and the *Crisis*, I should not like to take up with any of your B's, No. 2."

"You have forgotten to mention the *Pretty Poll*, Miles," said the divine, smiling. "Be under no fear, however, for your dignity; the vessel I have in treaty is all you could wish, they tell me, having made but one voyage, and is sold on account of the death of her owner. As for money, you will remember I have thirteen thousand dollars of your income invested in stocks, and stocks that cost but ten. The peace has brought everything up, and you are making money, right and left. How have your own pay and private venture turned out?"

"Perfectly well, sir. I am near three thousand dollars in pocket, and shall have no need to call on you for my personal wants. Then I have my prize money to touch. Even Neb, wages and prize-money, brings me nine hundred dollars. With your permission, sir, I should like to give the fellow his freedom."

"Wait till you are of age, Miles, and then you can do as you please. I hold four thousand dollars of your invested money, which has been paid in, and I have placed it in stocks. Altogether, I find we can muster in solid cash more than twenty thousand dollars, while the price of the ship, as she stands, almost ready for sea, is only fifteen. Now, go and look at the vessel; if you like her I will close the bargain at once."

"But, my dear Mr. Hardinge, do you think yourself exactly qualified to judge of the value of a ship?"

"Poh! poh! don't imagine I am so conceited as to purchase on my own knowledge. I have taken some of the very best advice of the city. There is John Murray, to begin with—a great shipbuilder himself, and Archibald Gracie, and William Bayard—all capital judges, have taken an interest in the affair. Three others of my friends have walked round to look at the vessel, and all approve—not a dissenting voice."

"May I ask, sir, who have seen her, besides the gentlemen you have named? They, I admit, are, indeed, good judges."

"Why—why—yes—do you happen to know anything of Doctor Benjamin Moore, now, Miles?"

"Never heard of him, sir, in my life; but a physician can be no great judge of a ship."

"No more of a physician than yourself, boy—Doctor Benjamin Moore, the gentleman we elected bishop, while you were absent——"

"Oh! he you wished to toast, instead

of Miss Peggy Perott," cried I, smiling. "Well, what does the bishop think of her—if he approve, she *must* be orthodox."

"He says she is the handsomest vessel he ever laid eyes on, Miles; and let me tell you, the favorable opinion of so good a man as Doctor Moore is of value, even though it be about a ship."

I could not avoid laughing, and I dare say most of the readers will also, at this touch of simplicity; and yet, why should not a bishop know as much of ships as a set of ignoramuses who never read a theological book in their lives, some of them not even the Bible, know about bishops? The circumstance was not a tittle more absurd than many that are occurring daily before our eyes, and to which, purely from habit, we submit, very much as a matter of course.

"Well, sir," I replied, as soon as I could, "I will look at the ship, get her character, and give you an answer at once. I like the idea, for it is pleasant to be one's own master."

In that day fifteen thousand dollars would buy a very excellent ship, as ships went. The vessel I was taken to see was coppered and copper-fastened, butt-bolted, and she measured just five hundred tons. She had a great reputation as a sailer, and, what was thought a good deal of in 1802, was Philadelphia built. She had been one voyage to China, and was little more than a year old, or the best possible age for a vessel. Her name was the *Dawn*, and she carried an "Aurora" for her figure-head. Whether she were, or were not, inclined to Puseyism, I never could ascertain, although I can affirm she had the services of the Protestant Episcopal Church read on board her afterward on more than one occasion.

The result of my examination and inquiries was favorable, and, by the end of the week, the *Dawn* was purchased. The owners of the *Crisis* were pleased to express their regrets, for they had intended that I should continue in the command of their vessel, but no one could object to a man's wishing to sail in his own employment. I made this important acquisition at what was probably the most auspicious moment of American navigation. It is a proof of this that, the very day I was put in possession of the ship, good freights were offered to no less than four different parts of the world. I had my choice between Holland, France, England, and China. After consulting with my guardian, I accepted that to France, which not only paid the best, but I was desirous of seeing more of the world than had yet fallen to my share. I could make a voyage to Bordeaux and back in five months, and by the end of that time I should be of age, and, consequently my own master. As I intended to have great doings at Clawbonny on that occasion, I thought it might be well not to go too far from home. Accordingly, after shipping Talcott and the Philadelphian, whose name was Walton, for my mates, we began to take in cargo as soon as possible.

In the meantime I bethought me of a visit to the paternal home. It was a season of the year when most people, who were anybodies, left town, and the villas along the shores of the Hudson had long been occupied. Mr. Hardinge, too, pined for the country and his flock. The girls had had enough of town, which was getting to be very dull, and everybody, Rupert excepted, seemed anxious to go up the river. I had invited the Mertons to pass part of the summer at the farm, moreover, and it was time the invitation should be renewed, for the major's physicians had advised him to choose some cooler residence than the streets of a hot, close town could furnish during the summer months. Emily had been so much engrossed with the set into which she had fallen since her landing, and which it was easy for me to see was altogether superior to that in which she had lived at home, that I was surprised at the readiness with which she urged her father to redeem his promise.

"Mr. Hardinge tells me, sir, that Clawbonny is really a pretty spot," she said, "and the country around it is thought to be very healthy. You cannot get answers from home (she meant England) for several months, and I know Captain

Wallingford will be happy to receive us. Besides we are pledged to accept this additional favor from him."

I thought Major Merton felt some of my own surprise at Emily's earnestness and manner, but his resistance was very feeble. The old gentleman's health, indeed, was pretty thoroughly undermined, and I began to have serious doubts of his living even to return to Europe. He had some relatives in Boston, and had opened a correspondence with them, and I had thought more than once of the expediency of apprising them of his situation. At present, however, nothing better could be done than to get him into the country.

Having made all the arrangements with the others, I went to persuade Rupert to be of the party, for I thought it would make both Grace and Lucy so much the happier.

"Miles, my dear fellow," said the younger student, gaping, "Clawbonny is certainly a capitalish place, but, you will admit, it is somewhat stupid after New York. My good kinswoman, Mrs. Bradfort, has taken such a fancy to us all, and has made me so comfortable—would you believe it, boy, she has actually given me six hundred a year, for the last two years, besides making Lucy presents fit for a queen. A sterling woman is she, this cousin Margaret of ours!"

I heard this, truly, not without surprise; for, in settling with my owners, I found Rupert had drawn every cent to which he was entitled, under the orders I had left when I last went to sea.

As Mrs. Bradfort was more than at her ease, however, had no nearer relative than Mr. Hardinge, and was much attached to the family, I had no difficulty in believing it true, so far as the lady's liberality was concerned. I heartily wished Rupert had possessed more self-respect; but he was, as he was!

"I am sorry you cannot go with us," I answered, "for I counted on you to help amuse the Mertons——"

"The Mertons! Why, surely, they are not going to pass the summer at Clawbonny!"

"They quit town with us, to-morrow. Why should not the Mertons pass the summer at Clawbonny?"

"Why, Miles, my dear boy, you know how it is with the world—how it is with these English, in particular. They think everything of rank, you know, and are devotees of the style and appearance, and all that sort of thing, you know, as no one understands better than myself; for I pass most of my time in the English set, you know."

I did not *then* understand what had come over Rupert, though it is all plain enough to me *now*. He had, truly enough, got into what was then called the English set. Now there is no question, that, so far as the natives, themselves, were concerned, this was as good a set as ever existed in this country; and it is also beyond all cavil, that many respectable English persons, of both sexes, were occasionally found in it; but it had this great defect:—*every* Englishman who wore a good coat, and had any of the slang of society, made his way into the outskirts, at least, of this set; and Rupert, whose own position was not yet thoroughly confirmed, had fallen a great deal into the association of these accidental comers and goers. They talked large, drank deep, and had a lofty disdain for everything in the country, though it was very certain they were just then in much better company where they were than they had ever been at home. Like most tyros, Rupert fancied these blustering gentry classes to imitate; and, as they seldom conversed ten minutes without having something to say of my Lord A— or Sir John B—, persons they had *read* of or seen in the streets, he was weak enough to imagine they knew all about the dignitaries of the British empire. As Rupert was really a gentleman, and had good manners naturally, it was a grievous thing to see him fashioning himself anew, as it were, on such very questionable models.

"Clawbonny is not a stylish place, I am ready to allow," I answered, after a moment of hesitation; "still, it is respectable. There is a good farm, a valuable mill, and a good, old, comfortable, straggling, stone house."

"Very true, Miles, my dear fellow, and all as dear to me, you know, as the apple of my eye—but *farmish*—young ladies like the good things that come from farms, but do not admire the homeliness of the residence. I speak of your English ladies, in particular. Now, you see, Major Merton is a field-officer, and that is having good rank in a respectable profession, you know—I suppose you understand, Miles, that the king puts most of his sons into the army, or navy—all this makes a difference, you understand!"

"I understand nothing about it; what is it to me where the King of England puts his son?"

"I wish, my dear Miles, if the truth must be said, that you and I had been a little less boyish, when we were boys, than happened to be the case. It would have been all the better for us both."

"Well, I wish no such thing. A boy should be a boy, and a man a man. I am content to have been a boy, while I was a boy. It is a fault in this country, that boys fancy themselves men too soon."

"Ah! my dear fellow, you *will* not, or do not understand me. What I mean is, that we were both precipitate in the choice of a profession—I retired in time, but you persevere; that is all."

"You did retire in season, my lad, if truth is what you are after; for had you stayed a hundred years on board ship, you never would have made a sailor."

When I said this I fancied I had uttered a pretty severe thing. Rupert took it so coolly, however, as to satisfy me at once that he thought differently on the subject.

"Clearly, it is not my vocation. Nature intended me for something better, I trust, and I mistook a boyish inclination for a taste. A little experience taught me better, and I am now where I feel I ought to be. I wish, Miles, you had come to the study of the law, at the time you went to sea. You would have been, by this time, at the bar, and would have had a definite position in society."

"I am very glad I did not. What the deuce should I have done as a lawyer—or what advantage would it have been to me to be admitted to the bar?"

"Advantage! Why, my dear fellow, every advantage in the world. You know how it is in this country, I suppose, in the way of society, my dear Miles?"

"Not I—and, by the little I glean from the manner you sheer about in your discourse, I wish to know nothing. Do young men study law merely to be genteel?"

"Do not despise knowledge, my boy; it is of use, even in trifles. Now in this country, you know, we have very few men of mere leisure—heirs of estates to live on their incomes, as is done in Europe; but nine-tenths of us must follow professions, of which there are only half a dozen suitable for a gentleman. The army and navy are nothing, you know; two or three regiments scattered about in the woods, and half a dozen vessels. After these there remain the three learned professions, divinity, law, and physic. In our family divinity has run out, I fear. As for physic, 'throw physic to the dogs,' as Miss Merton says——"

"Who?" I exclaimed, in surprise. "'Throw physic to the dogs'—why, that is Shakespeare, man!"

"I know it, and it is Miss Emily Merton's too. You have made us acquainted with a charming creature, at least, Miles, by this going to sea. Her notions on such subjects are as accurate as a sun-dial."

"And has Miss Emily Merton ever conversed with you on the subject of *my* profession, Rupert?"

"Indeed she has, and regretted it, again and again. You know as well as I do, Miles, to be a sailor, other than in a navy, is not a *genteel* profession!"

I broke out into a fit of laughter at this remark. It struck me as infinitely droll, and as somewhat silly. I knew my precise position in society, perfectly; and had none of the silly swaggering about personal merit, and of "one man's being as good as another," that has since got into such general use among us; and understood perfectly the useful and unavoidable classifications that take place in all civilized communities, and which, while they are attended by certain disadvantages as exceptions, prove great benefits

as a whole, and was not disposed at all to exaggerate my claims or to deny my deficiencies. But the idea of attaching any considerations of *gentility* to my noble, manly, daring profession, sounded so absurd I could not avoid laughing. In a few moments, however, I became grave.

"Harkee, Rupert," said I; "I trust Miss Merton does not think I endeavored to mislead her as to my true position, or to make her think I was a greater personage than I truly am?"

"I'll not answer for that. When we were first acquainted, I found she had certain notions about Clawbonny, and your *estate*, and all that, which were rather English, you know. Now in England, an estate gives a man a certain consideration, whereas land is so plenty with us, that we think nothing of the man who happens to own a little of it. *Stock*, in America, as it is so much nearer ready money, is a better thing than land, you know."

How true was this, even ten years since; how false is it to-day! The proprietor of tens of thousands of acres was, indeed, under the paper money *régime*, a less important man than the owner of a handful of scrip, which has had all its value squeezed out of it, little by little. That was truly the age when the representative of property was of far more importance than the property itself; and all because the country existed in a fever that set everything in motion. We shall see just such times again, I fear.

"But what had Emily Merton to do with all this!"

"Miss Merton? Oh! she is English, you know, and felt as English persons always do at the sound of acres. I set it all right, however, and you need be under no concern."

"The devil you did! And, pray, in what manner was this done? *How* was the matter set right?"

Rupert took the cigar from his mouth, suffered the smoke to issue, by a small, deliberate jet, cocking his nose up at the same time, as if observing the stars, and then deigned to give me an answer. Your smokers have such a disdainful, ultra-philosophical manner, sometimes!

"Why, just in this way, my fine fellow. I told her Clawbonny was a *farm*, and not an *estate*, you know; that did a good deal, of itself. Then I entered into an explanation of the consideration of farmers in this country, you know, and made it all as plain as A B C. She is a quick girl, is Emily, and takes a thing remarkably soon."

"Did Miss Merton say anything to induce you to suppose she thought the less of me, for these explanations?"

"Of course not—she values you amazingly—quite worships you, *as a sailor*—thinks you a sort of merchant captain Nelson, or Blake, or Truxtun, and all that sort of thing. All young ladies, however, are exceedingly particular about professions, I suppose you know, Miles, as well as I do myself."

"What, Lucy, Rupert? Do you imagine Lucy cares a straw about my not being a lawyer, for instance?"

"Do I? Out of all question. Don't you remember how the girls wept—Grace as well as Lucy—when we went to sea, boy. It was all on account of the *un*gentility of the profession, if a fellow can use such a word."

I did not believe this, for I knew Grace better, to say the least; and thought I understood Lucy sufficiently, at that time, to know she wept because she was sorry to see me go away. Still, Lucy had grown from a very young girl, since I sailed in the *Crisis*, into a young woman, and might view things differently, now, from what she had done three years before. I had not time, however, for further discussion at that moment, and I cut the matter short.

"Well, Rupert, what am I to expect?" I asked; "Clawbonny, or no Clawbonny?"

"Why, now you say the Mertons are to be of the party, I suppose I shall have to go; it would be inhospitable else. I do wish, Miles, you would manage to establish visiting relations with some of the families on the other side of the river. There are plenty of respectable people within a few hours' sail of Clawbonny."

"My father, and my grandfather, and my great-grandfather, managed, as you call it, to get along for the last hundred years, well enough on the west side; and, although we are not quite as genteel as the *east*, we will do well enough. The *Wallingford* sails early in the morning, to save the tide; and I hope your lordship will turn out in season, and not keep us waiting. If you do, I shall be *ungenteel* enough to leave you behind."

I left Rupert with a feeling in which disgust and anger were blended. I wish to be understood, more particularly, as I know I am writing for a stiff-necked generation. I never was guilty of the weakness of decrying a thing because I did not happen to possess it myself. I knew my own place in the social scale perfectly; nor was I, as I have just said, in the least inclined to fancy that one man was as good as another. I knew very well that this was not true, either in nature or in the social relations; in political axioms, any more than in political truths. At the same time, I did not believe nature had created men unequal, in the order of primogeniture, from male to male.

Keeping in view all the facts, I was perfectly disposed to admit that habits, education, association, and sometimes chance and caprice, drew distinctions that produced great benefits, as a whole; in some small degree qualified, perhaps, by cases of individual injustice. This last exception, however, being applicable to all things human, it had no influence on my opinions, which were sound and healthful on all these points; practical, common-sense like, and in conformity with the decisions of the world from the time of Moses down to our own, or, I dare day, of Adam himself, if the truth could be known; and, as I have said more than once in these rambling memoirs, I was not disposed to take a false view of my own social position. I belonged, at most, to the class of small proprietors, as they existed in the last century, and filled a very useful and respectable niche between the yeoman and gentleman, considering the last strictly in reference to the upper class of that day. Now it struck me that Emily Merton, with her English notions, might very well draw the distinctions Rupert had mentioned; nor am I conscious of having cared much about it, though she did. If I were a less important person on *terra firma*, with all the usages and notions of ordinary society producing their influence, than I had been when in command of the *Crisis*, in the center of the Pacific, so was Miss Merton a less important young lady, in the midst of the beauty of New York, than she had been in the isolation of Marble Land. This I could feel very distinctly.

But Lucy's supposed defection did more than annoy me. I felt humbled, mortified, grieved. I had always known that Lucy was better connected than I was myself, and I had ever given Rupert and her the benefit of this advantage, as some offset to my own and Grace's larger means; but it had never struck me that either the brother or sister would be disposed to look down upon us in consequence. The world is everywhere—and America, on account of its social vicissitudes, more than most other countries—constantly exhibiting pictures of the struggles between fallen consequence and rising wealth. The last may and does have the best of it, in the mere physical part of the strife; but in the more moral, if such a word can be used, the quiet ascendency of better manners and ancient recollections is very apt to overshadow the fussy pretensions of the vulgar aspirant, who places his claims altogether on the all-mighty dollar. It is vain to deny it; men ever have done it, and probably ever will defer to the past, in matters of this sort—it being much with us, in this particular, as it is with our own lives, which have had all their greatest enjoyments in by-gone days. I knew all this—felt all this—and was greatly afraid that Lucy, through Mrs. Bradfort's influence, and her town associations, might have learned to regard me as Captain Wallingford, of the merchant-service, and the son of another Captain Wallingford of the same line in life. I determined, therefore, to watch her with jealous attention, during the few days I was to remain at Clawbonny.

With such generous intentions, the reader is not to be surprised if I found some of that for which I so earnestly sought—people being very apt to find precisely the thing for which they look, when it is not lost money.

The next morning we were all punctual, and sailed at the proper hour. The Mertons seemed pleased with the river, and, having a fresh southerly wind in our favor, with a strong flood-tide, we actually landed at the mill the same afternoon. Everything is apt to be agreeable when the traveler gets on famously; and I thought I never saw Emily in better spirits than she was when we first reached the top of the ascent that lies above the landing. I had given her my arm, as due to hospitality, while the others got up as they could; for I observed that Rupert assisted no one. As for Lucy, I was still too much vexed with her, and had been so all day, to be as civil as I ought. We were soon at a point that commanded a view of the house, meadows, orchards, and fields.

"This, then, is Clawbonny!" exclaimed Emily, as soon as I pointed out the place to her. "Upon my word, a very pretty farm, Captain Wallingford. Even prettier than you represented it to be, Mr. Rupert Hardinge."

"Oh! I always do justice to everything of Wallingford's, you know. We were children together, and became so much attached in early life that it's no wonder we remain so in these our later days."

Rupert was probably nearer the truth than he imagined, when he made this speech; my regard for him, by this time, being pretty much reduced to habit; and certainly it had no increase from any fresh supplies of respect. I began to hope he might not marry Grace, though I had formerly looked forward to the connection as a settled thing. "Let him get Miss Merton, if he can," I said to myself; "it will be no great acquisition, I fancy, to either side."

How different was it with his father, and, I may add, with Lucy! The old gentleman turned to me, with tears in his eyes; pointed to the dear old house, with a look of delight; and then took my arm, without reference to the wants of Miss Merton, and led me on, conversing earnestly of my affairs, and of his own stewardship. Lucy had her father's arm, on the other side; and the good divine was too much accustomed to her, to mind the presence of his daughter. Away we three went, therefore, leading the way, while Rupert took charge of Emily and Grace. Major Merton followed, leaning on his own man.

"It is a lovely—it is a lovely spot, Miles," said Mr. Hardinge; "and I do most sincerely hope you will never think of tearing down that respectable-looking, comfortable, substantial, good old-fashioned house, to build a new one."

"Why should I, dear sir? The house, with an occasional addition, all built in the same style, has served us a century, and may very well serve another. Why should I wish for more, or a better house?"

"Why, sure enough? But now you are a sort of a merchant, you may grow rich, and wish to be the proprietor of a *seat*."

The time had been, when such thoughts often crossed my mind; but I cared less for them, then. To own a *seat* was the great object of my ambition in my boyhood; but the thought had weakened by time and reflection.

"What does Lucy think of the matter? Do I want, or indeed deserve, a better house?"

"I shall not answer either question," replied the dear girl, a little saucily, I thought. "I do not understand your wants, and do not choose to speak of your deservings. But I fancy the question will be settled by a certain Mrs. Wallingford, one of these days. Clever women generally determine these things for their husbands."

I endeavored to catch Lucy's eye, when this was said, by leaning a little forward myself; but the girl turned her head in such a manner as prevented my seeing her face. The remark was not lost on Mr. Hardinge, however, who took it up with warmth, and all the interest of a most pure and disinterested affection.

"I suppose you *will* think of marrying, one of these days, Miles," he said; "but, on no account, marry a woman who will desert Clawbonny, or who would wish materially to alter it. No good-hearted woman, indeed—no *true*-hearted woman—would ever dream of either. Dear me! dear me! the happy days and the sorrowful days—the gracious mercies of Providence, and the chastening afflictions—that I myself have seen, and felt, and witnessed, under these same roofs!"

This was followed by a sort of enumeration of the events of the last forty years, including passages in the lives of all who had dwelt at the farm, the whole concluding with the divine's solemnly repeating—"No, no! Miles! do not think, even, of marrying a woman who would wish you to desert, or materially alter, Clawbonny."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady."
—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

NEXT morning, I was early afoot, and I found Grace as much alive to the charms of home as I was myself. She put on a gypsy, and accompanied me into the garden, where, to my surprise, I found Lucy. It looked like old times to be in that spot, again, with those two dear girls. Rupert alone was wanting to complete the picture; but, I had an intimate conviction that Rupert, as he had been at least, could never come within the setting of the family group again. I was rejoiced, however, to see Lucy, and more so, just where I found her, and I believe told her as much with my eyes. The charming girl looked happier than she had appeared the day before, or for many previous days indeed, and I felt less apprehension than of late concerning her having met with any agreeable youth of a more *genteel* profession than that of a merchant-captain.

"I did not expect to find *you* here, Miss Lucy," cried Grace, "eating half-ripe currants, too, or my eyes deceive me, at this early hour in the morning. It is not twenty minutes since you were in your own room, quite unadorned."

"The green fruit of dear Clawbonny is better than the *ripe* fruit of those vile New York markets!" exclaimed Lucy, with a fervor so natural as to forbid any suspicion of acting. "I should prefer a Clawbonny potato, to a New York peach!"

Grace smiled, and as soon as Lucy's animation had a little subsided *she* blushed.

"How much better would it be, Miles," my sister resumed, "could you be induced to think and feel with us, and quit the seas, to come and live for the rest of your days on the spot where your fathers have so long lived before you. Would it not, Lucy?"

"Miles will never do *that*," Lucy answered, with emphasis. "Men are not like us females, who love everything we love at all with all our whole hearts. Men prefer wandering about, and being shipwrecked, and left on desert islands, to remaining quietly at home on their own farms. No, no, you'll never persuade Miles to do *that*."

"I am not astonished my brother thinks desert islands such pleasant abodes, when he can find companions like Miss Merton on them."

"You will remember, sister of mine, in the first place, that Marble Land is very far from being a desert island at all; and in the next, that I found Miss Merton in Hyde Park, London, almost in the canal, for that matter."

"I think it a little odd that Miles never told us all about this in his letters at the time, Lucy. When young gentlemen drag young ladies out of canals, their friends at home have a right to know something of the matter."

How much unnecessary misery is inflicted by unmeaning expressions like this. Grace spoke lightly, and probably without a second thought about the matter; but the little she said not only made me thoughtful and uneasy, but it drove everything like a smile from the usually radiant countenance of her friend. The conversa-

tion dragged, and soon after we returned together to the house.

I was much occupied that morning in riding about the place with Mr. Hardinge, and in listening to his account of the stewardship. With the main results I was already acquainted, nay, possessed them in the *Dawn*, but the details had all to be gone over with the most minute accuracy. A more simple-minded being there was not on earth than Mr. Hardinge; and that my affairs turned out so well was the result of the prosperous condition of the country at that day, the system my father had adopted in his lifetime, and the good qualities of the different agents he had chosen—every one of whom remained in the situation in which he was at the sad moment of the fatal accident at the mill. Had matters really depended on the knowledge and management of the most excellent divine, they would soon have been at sixes and sevens.

"I am no believer in miracles, my dear Miles," observed my guardian, with amusing self-complacency; "but I do think a change has been wrought in me, to meet the emergencies of a situation in which the interests of two orphans have been so suddenly intrusted to my guidance and care. God be thanked! everything prospers; your affairs, as well as those of my dear Grace. It is wonderful, boy, how a man of my habits has been directed in his purchase of wheat, for instance; I, who never bought a bushel until the whole responsibility of your mills fell upon my shoulders. I take no credit to myself for it—no credit to myself!"

"I hope the miller has not been backward, my dear sir, in giving you all the assistance in his power."

"Morgan? yes, he is always ready; and you know I never forget to send him into the market to both buy and sell. Really his advice has been so excellent, that to me it has the appearance of being almost miraculous—prophetic, I should say, were it not improper. We should avoid all exaggeration in our gratitude, boy."

"Very truly, sir. And in what manner have you managed to get along so well with the crops on the place itself?"

"Favored by the same great adviser, Miles. It is really wonderful, the crops we have had, and the judgment that has been so providentially shown in the management of the fields as well as of the mills!"

"Of course, sir, old Hiram (Neb's uncle) has always been ready to give you his aid? Hiram has a great deal of judgment in his way."

"No doubt, no doubt. Hiram and I have done it all, led by a providential counsel. Well, my boy, you ought to be satisfied with your earthly lot, for everything seems to prosper that belongs to you. Of course you will marry, one of these days, and transmit this place to your son, as it has been received from your fathers?"

"I keep that hope in perspective, sir; or, as we sailors say, for a sheet-anchor."

"Your hope of salvation, boy, is your sheet-anchor, I trust. Nevertheless, we are not to be too hard on young men, and must let them have a little romance in their compositions. Yes, yes; I trust you will not become so much wedded to your ship as not to think of taking a wife one of these days. It will be a happy hour to me when I can see another Mrs. Miles Wallingford at Clawbonny. She will be the third; for I can remember your grandmother."

"Can you recommend to me a proper person to fill that honorable station, sir?" said I, smiling to myself, and exceedingly curious to hear the answer.

"What do you think of this Miss Merton, boy? She is handsome, and that pleases young men; clever, and that pleases old ones; well educated, and that will last when the beauty is gone; and, so far as I can judge, amiable; and that is as necessary to a wife as fidelity. *Marry no woman, Miles, that is not amiable!*"

"May I ask *what* you call amiable, sir? and, when that question is answered, I may venture to go so far as to inquire *whom* you call amiable?"

"Very sensible distinctions, and such

as are entitled to fair answers; at least the first. I do not call levity, amiability; nor mere constitutional gayety. Some of the seemingly most light-hearted women I have ever known, have been anything but amiable. There must be an unusual absence of selfishness—a person must live less for herself, than others—or rather, must find her own happiness in the happiness of those she loves, to make a truly amiable woman. Heart and principle are at the bottom of what is truly amiable; though temperament and disposition undoubtedly contribute. As for the *whom*, your own sister Grace is a truly amiable young woman. I never knew her do anything to hurt another's feelings in my life."

"I suppose you will admit, sir, I cannot very well marry Grace?"

"I wish you could, with all my heart—yes, with all my heart! Were not you and Grace brother and sister, I should consider myself well quit of the responsibility of my guardianship, in seeing you man and wife."

"As that is out of the question, I am not without hopes you can mention another who will do just as well so far as I am concerned."

"Well, there is Miss Merton—though I do not know her well enough to venture absolutely on a recommendation. Now I told Lucy, no later than yesterday, while we were on the river, and as you were pointing out to Miss Merton the forts in the Highlands, that I thought you would make one of the handsomest couples in the State; and, moreover, I told her—bless me, how this corn grows! The plants will be in tassel in a few days, and the crop must turn out most beneficent—truly, truly there is a Providence in all things; for, at first, I was for putting the corn on yonder hill-side, and the potatoes here; but old Hiram was led by some invisible agency to *insist* on this field for the corn, and the hill-side for the potatoes; and, now, look and see what crops are in promise! Think of a nigger's blundering on such a thing!"

In 1802, even well-educated and well-intentioned clergymen had no scruples in saying "nigger."

"But, sir, you have quite forgotten to add what else you told Lucy."

"True, true—it is very natural that you should prefer hearing me talk about Miss Merton, to hearing me talk about potatoes. I'll tell *that* to Lucy, too, you may depend on it."

"I sincerely hope you will do no such thing, my dear sir," I cried, in no little alarm.

"Ah! that betrays guilt—consciousness, I should say; for what guilt can there be in a virtuous love? and rely on it, both the girls shall know all about it. Lucy and I often talk over your matters, Miles; for she loves you as well as your own sister. Ah! my fine fellow, you blush at it, like a girl of sixteen! But there is nothing to be ashamed of, and there is no occasion for blushes."

"Well, sir, letting my blushes—the blushes of a ship-master!—but setting aside my blushes, for mercy's sake *what more* did you tell Lucy?"

"What more? Why, I told her how you had been on a desert island, quite alone, as one might say, with Miss Merton, and how you had been at sea, living in the same cabin, as it were, for nine months; and it would be wonderful, indeed, if two so handsome young persons should not feel an attachment for each other. Country might make some difference, to be sure——"

"And station, sir? What do you think would be the influence of the difference of station, also?"

"Station! Bless me, Miles; what difference in station is there between you and Miss Merton, that it should cause any obstacle to your union?"

"You know what it is, sir, as well as I do myself. She is the daughter of an officer in the British army, and I am the master of a ship. You will admit, I presume, Mr. Hardinge, that there is such a thing as a difference in station?"

"Beyond all question. It is exceedingly useful to remember it; and I greatly fear the loose appointments of magistrates and other functionaries, that are making round the country, will bring all our notions on such subjects into great confusion.

I can understand that one man is as good as another in *rights*, Miles; but I cannot understand he is any *better*, because he happens to be uneducated, ignorant, or a blackguard."

Mr. Hardinge was a sensible man in all such distinctions, though so simple in connection with other matters.

"You can have no difficulty, however, in understanding that in New York, for instance, I should not be considered the equal of Major Merton—I mean socially altogether, and not in personal merit or the claims which years give—and, of course, not the equal of his daughter."

"Why—yes—I know what you mean, now. There may be some little inequality in that sense, perhaps; but Clawbonny and the ship, and the money at use, would be very apt to strike a balance."

"I am afraid not, sir. I should have studied law, sir, had I wished to make myself a gentleman."

"There are lots of vulgar fellows getting into the law, Miles, men who have not half your claims to be considered gentlemen. I hope you do not think I wished you and Rupert to study law in order to make gentlemen of you?"

"No, sir; it was unnecessary to take that step as regards Rupert, who was fully born in the station. Clergymen have a decided position all over the world, I believe; and then you are extremely well-connected otherwise, Mr. Hardinge. Rupert has no occasion for such an assistance; with me it was a little different."

"Miles, Miles, this is a strange fancy to come over a young man in your situation —and who, I am afraid, has been the subject of envy only too often, to Rupert!"

"If the truth were known, Mr. Hardinge, I dare say both Rupert and Lucy, in their secret hearts, think they possess advantages in the way of social station that do not belong to Grace and myself."

Mr. Hardinge looked hurt, and I was soon sorry that I had made this speech. Nor would I have the reader imagine that what I had said proceeded in the least from that narrow, selfish feeling which, under the blustering pretension of equality, presumes to deny the existence of a very potent social fact; but simply from the sensitiveness of feelings which on this subject were somewhat in danger of becoming morbid, through the agency of the most powerful passion of the human heart, or that which has well been called the master-passion. Nevertheless, Mr. Hardinge was much too honest a man to deny a truth, and much too sincere to wish even to prevaricate about it, however unpleasant it might be to acknowledge it in all its unpleasant bearings.

"I now understand you, Miles, and it would be idle to pretend that there is not some justice in what you say, though I attach very little importance to it myself. Rupert is not exactly what I could wish him to be in all things, and possibly *he* may be coxcomb enough, at times, to fancy he has this slight advantage over you, but as for Lucy, I'll engage she never thinks of you but as a second brother, and that she loves you exactly as she loves Rupert."

Mr. Hardinge's simplicity was of proof, and it was idle to think of making any impression on it. I changed the subject, therefore, and this was easily enough done by beginning again to talk about the potatoes. I was far from being easy, nevertheless; for I could not avoid seeing that the good divine's restlessness might readily widen the little breach which had opened between his daughter and myself.

That day, at dinner, I discovered that Grace's winter in town had led to a sensible melioration of the domestic economy; most especially as related to the table. My father and mother had introduced some changes, which rendered the Clawbonny household affairs a little different from those of most other of the Ulster county families near our own class; but their innovations, or improvements, or whatever they might be called, were far from being as decided as those introduced by their daughter. Nothing, perhaps, sooner denotes the condition of people, than the habits connected with the table. If eating and drinking be not done in a certain way, and a way founded in reason, too, as indeed are nearly all the customs of polished life, whatever may be the

cant of the ultras of reason—but, if eating and drinking be not done in a certain way, your people of the world perceive it sooner than almost anything else. There is, also, more of common sense and innate fitness, in the usages of the table, so long as they are not dependent on mere caprice, than in almost any other part of our deportment; for everybody must eat, and most persons choose to eat decently. I had been a little nervous on the subject of the Mertons, in connection with the Clawbonny table, I will confess; and great was my delight when I found the breakfast going off so well. As for the major, himself by no means familiar with the higher classes of his own country, he had that great stamp of a gentleman, simplicity; and he was altogether above the cockney distinctions of eating and drinking; those about cheese and malt liquors, and such vulgar niceties; nor was he a man to care about the silver-forkisms; but he understood that portion of the finesse of the table which depended on reason and taste, and was accustomed to observe it. This I knew from near a twelvemonth's intercourse, and I had feared we might turn out to be a little too rustic.

Grace had made provisions against all this, with a tact and judgment for which I could have worshiped her. I knew the viands, the vegetables, and the wines would all be good of their kind, for in these we seldom failed; nor did I distrust the cookery, the *English*-descended families of the Middle States, of my class, understanding that to perfection; but I feared we should fail in those little incidents of style and arrangement, and in the order of the service, that denote a well-regulated table. This is just what Grace had seen to; and I found that a great revolution had been quietly effected in this branch of our domestic economy during my absence; thanks to Grace's observations while at Mrs. Bradfort's.

Emily seemed pleased at dinner, and Lucy could again laugh and smile. After the cloth was removed, the major and Mr. Hardinge discussed a bottle of Madeira, and that, too, of a quality of which I had no reason to be ashamed; while we young people withdrew together to a little piazza that was in the shade at that hour, and took seats for a chat. Rupert was permitted to smoke, on condition that he would not approach within fifteen feet of the party. No sooner was this little group thus arranged, the three girls in a crescent, than I disappeared.

"Grace, I have not yet spoken to you of a necklace of pearls possessed by your humble servant," I cried, as my foot again touched the piazza. "I would not say a word about it——"

"Yet Lucy and I heard all about it," answered Grace, with provoking calmness, "but would not ask to see it, lest you should accuse us of girlish curiosity. We waited your high pleasure in the matter."

"You and Lucy heard I had such a necklace?"

"Most unquestionably; I, Grace Wallingford, and she, Lucy Hardinge. I hope it is no infringement on the rights of Mr. Miles Clawbonny"—so the girls often called me, when they affected to think I was on my high-ropes—"I hope it is no infringement on the rights of Mr. Miles Clawbonny to say as much?"

"And pray how *could* you and Lucy know anything about it?"

"That is altogether another question; perhaps we may accord an answer, after we have seen the necklace."

"Miss Merton told us, Miles," said Lucy, looking at me with gentleness, for she saw I really wished an answer; and what could Lucy Hardinge ever refuse me, that was right in itself, when she saw my feelings were really interested?

"Miss Merton? Then I have been betrayed, and the surprise I anticipated is lost."

I was vexed, and my manner must have shown it in a slight degree. Emily colored, bit her lip, and said nothing, but Grace made her excuses with more spirit than it was usual for *her* to show.

"You are rightly punished, Master Miles," she cried; "for you had no business to anticipate surprise. They are vulgar things at best, and they are worse than that when they come from a dis-

tance of fifteen thousand miles—from a brother to a sister. Besides, you have surprised us sufficiently once, already, in connection with Miss Merton."

"I!" I exclaimed.

"Me!" added Emily.

"Yes, I and me; did you tell us one word about her in your letters? and have you not now both surprised and delighted us, by making us acquainted with so charming a person? I can pardon such a surprise, on account of its consequences; but nothing so vulgar as a surprise about pearls."

Emily blushed now; and in her it was possible to tell the difference between a blush and the suffusion that arose from a different feeling; but she looked immensely superior to anything like explanations.

"Captain Wallingford"—how I disliked that *Captain*—"Captain Wallingford can have but little knowledge of young ladies," she said, coldly, "if he supposes such pearls as he possesses would not form the subject of their conversation."

I was coxcomb enough to fancy Emily vexed that I had neglected to be more particular about her being on the island, and her connection with the ship. This might have been a mistake, however.

"Let us see the pearls, Miles, and that will plead your apology," said Lucy.

"There, then — your charming eyes, young ladies, never looked on pearls like those before."

Female nature could not suppress the exclamations of delight that succeeded. Even Rupert, who had a besetting weakness on the subject of all personal ornaments, laid aside his cigar, and came within the prescribed distance, the better to admire. It was admitted all round, New York had nothing to compare with them. I then mentioned that they had been fished up by myself from the depths of the sea.

"How much that adds to their value!" said Lucy, in a low voice, but in her warm, sincere manner.

"That was getting them *cheap*, was it not, Miss Wallingford?" inquired Emily, with an emphasis I disliked.

"Very, though I agree with Lucy, it makes them so much the more valuable."

"If Miss Merton will forget my charge of treason, and condescend to put on the necklace, you will all see it to much greater advantage than at present. If a fine necklace embellishes a fine woman, the advantage is quite reciprocal. I have seen my pearls once already on her neck, and know the effect."

A wish of Grace's aided my application, and Emily placed the ornaments around her throat. The dazzling whiteness of her skin gave a luster to the pearls that they certainly did not previously possess. One scarcely knew which to admire the most—the ornaments or their setting.

"How very, very beautiful they are *now!*" cried Lucy, in generous admiration. "Oh, Miss Merton, pearls should ever be your ornaments."

"*Those* pearls, you mean, Lucy," put in Rupert, who was always extremely liberal with other people's means; "the necklace ought never to be removed."

"Miss Merton knows their destination," I said, gallantly, "and the terms of ownership."

Emily slowly undid the clasp, placed the string before her eyes, and looked at it long and silently.

"And what is this destination, Miles? What these terms of ownership?" my sister asked.

"Of course he means them for you, dear," Lucy remarked in haste. "For whom else can he intend such an ornament?"

"You are mistaken, Miss Hardinge. Grace must excuse me for being a little selfish this time, at least. I do not intend those pearls for Miss Wallingford, but for Mrs. Wallingford, should there ever be such a person."

"Upon my word, such a double temptation, my boy, I wonder Miss Merton ever had the fortitude to remove them from the enviable position they so lately occupied," cried Rupert, glancing meaningly toward Emily, who returned the look with a slight smile.

"Of course, Miss Merton understood that my remark was ventured in pleas-

antry," I said stiffly, "and not in presumption. It was decided, however, when in the Pacific, that these pearls ought to have that destination. It is true, Clawbonny is not the Pacific, and one may be pardoned for seeing things a little differently *here*, from what they appeared *there*. I have a few more pearls, however, very inferior in quality, I confess, to those of the necklace; but, such as they are, I should esteem it a favor, ladies, if you would consent to divide them equally among you. They would make three very pretty rings, and as many breastpins."

I put into Grace's hands a little box containing all the pearls that had not been placed on the string. There were many fine ones among them, and some of them of very respectable size, though most were of the sort called seed. In the whole, there were several hundreds.

"We will not balk his generosity," said Grace, smiling; "so, Miss Merton, we will separate the pearls into three parcels, and draws lots for them. Here are handsome ornaments among them!"

"They will have one value with you, at least, Grace, and quite likely with Lucy, while they might possibly possess another with Miss Merton. I fished up every one of those pearls with my own hands."

"Certainly that will give them value with both Lucy and me, dearest Miles, as would the simple fact that they are your gift—but what is to give them their especial value with Miss Merton?"

"They may serve to remind Miss Merton of some of her hairbreadth escapes, of the weeks passed on the island, and of scenes that, a few years hence, will probably possess the colors of a dream, in her recollection."

"*One* pearl I will take, with this particular object," said Emily, with more feeling than I had seen her manifest since she had got back into the world, "if Miss Wallingford will do me the favor to select it."

"Let it be enough for a ring, at least," Grace returned, in her own sweetest manner. "Half a dozen of the finest of these pearls, of which one shall be on Miles's account, and five on mine."

"On those conditions, let it, then, be six. I have no occasion for pearls to remind me how much my father and myself owe to Captain Wallingford."

"Come, Rupert," added Grace, "you have a taste in these things, let us have your aid in the selection."

Rupert was by no means backward in complying, for he loved to be meddling in such matters.

"In the first place," he said, "I shall at once direct that the number be increased to seven; this fine one in the center, and three on each side, gradually diminishing in size. We must look to quality, and not to weight, for the six puisné judges, as we should call them in the courts. The chief justice will be a noble-looking fellow, and the associates ought to be of good quality to keep his honor's company."

"Why do you not call your judges, 'my lord,' as we do in England, Mr. Hardinge?" inquired Emily, in her prettiest manner.

"*Why*, sure enough! I wish with all my heart we did, and then a man would have something worth living for."

"Rupert!" exclaimed Lucy, coloring, "you know it is because our government is republican, and that we have no nobles among us. Nor do you say exactly what you think; you would not be 'my lord,' if you could."

"As I never shall be a 'my lord,' and I am afraid never a 'your honor.' There, Miss Merton—there are numbers two and three—observe how beautifully they are graduated as to size."

"Well, 'your honor,'" added Grace, who began to be a little uneasy at the manner Rupert and Emily exhibited toward each other—"well, 'your honor,' what is to come next?"

"Numbers four and five, of course; and here they are, Miss Merton, as accurately diminished as if done by hand. A beautiful ring it will make. I envy those who will be recalled to mind by so charming an object."

"You will now be one of those yourself, Mr. Hardinge," observed Emily, with great tact; "for you are fully entitled to

it by the trouble you are giving yourself, and the taste and judgment you possess."

Lucy looked petrified. She had so long accustomed herself to think of Grace as her future sister, that the open admiration expressed in Rupert's countenance, which was too manifest to escape any of us, first threw a glimmering of light on suspicions of the most painful nature. I had long seen that Lucy understood her brother's character better than any of us —much better, indeed, than his simple-minded father; and, as for myself, I was prepared to expect anything but consistency and principle in his conduct. Dearly as I prized Lucy, and by this time the slight competition that Emily Merton had presented to my fancy had entirely given way to the dear creature's heart and nature—but, dearly as I prized Lucy, I would greatly have preferred that my sister should not marry her brother; and, so far from feeling resentment on account of his want of fidelity, I was rather disposed to rejoice at it. I could appreciate his want of merit, and his unfitness to be the husband of such a woman as Grace, even at my early age; but, alas! I could not appreciate the effects of his inconstancy on a heart like that of my sister. Could I have felt as easy on the subject of Mr. Andrew Drewett, and of my own precise position in society, I should have cared very little just then about Rupert and his caprices.

The pearls for the ring were soon selected by Rupert, and approved of by Grace, after which I assumed the office of dividing the remainder myself. I drew a chair, took the box from Rupert, and set about the task.

"I shall make a faithful umpire, girls," I observed, as pearl after pearl was laid, first on one spot, then on another—"for I feel no preference between you—Grace is as Lucy; Lucy is as Grace, with me."

"That may be fortunate, Miss Hardinge, since it indicates no preference of a particular sort, that might require repressing," said Emily, smiling significantly at Lucy. "When gentlemen treat young ladies as sisters, it is a subject of rejoicing. These sailors need severe lessons, to keep them within the rules of the land."

Why this was said, I did not understand. But Rupert laughed at it, as if it were a capital thing. To mend the matter, he added, a little boisterously for him—

"You see, Miles, you had better have taken to the law—the ladies cannot appreciate the merits of you tars."

"So it would seem," I returned, a little dryly, "after all Miss Merton has experienced and seen of the trade."

Emily made no reply, but she regarded her pearls with a steadiness that showed she was thinking more of their effect than that of either her own speech or mine. I continued to divide the pearls, and soon had the work complete.

"What am I to do, now?" I asked. "Will you draw lots, girls, or will you trust to my impartiality?"

"We will certainly confide in the last," answered Grace. "The division is so very equitable that I do not well see how you can defraud either."

"That being the case, this parcel is for you, Lucy; and Grace, that is yours."

Grace rose, put her arms affectionately around my neck, and gave me one of the hundred kisses that I had received, first and last, for presents of one sort and another. The deep attachment that beamed in her saint-like eyes would of itself have repaid me for fifty such gifts. At the moment, I was almost on the point of throwing her the necklace in the bargain; but some faint fancies about Mrs. Miles Wallingford prevented me from so doing. As for Lucy, not a little to my surprise, she received the pearls, muttered a few unintelligible words, but did not even rise from her chair. Emily seemed to tire of this, so she caught up her gypsy, said the evening was getting to be delightful, and proposed a walk. Rupert and Grace cheerfully acquiesced, and the three soon left the place, Lucy preparing to follow, as soon as a maid could bring her hat, and I excusing myself on the score of business in my own room.

"Miles," said Lucy, as I was about to enter the house, she herself standing on the edge of the piazza on the point of fol-

lowing the party, but holding toward me the little paper box in which I had placed her portion of the pearls.

"Do you wish me to put them away for you, Lucy?"

"No, Miles—not for *me*—but for *yourself*—for Grace—for *Mrs. Miles Wallingford*, if you prefer that."

This was said without the slightest appearance of any other feeling than a gentle request. I was surprised, and scarce knew what to make of it; at first, I refused to take the box.

"I hope I have done nothing to merit this, Lucy?" I said, half affronted, half grieved.

"Remember, Miles," the dear girl answered, "we are no longer children, but have reached an age when it is incumbent on us to respect appearances a little. These pearls must be worth a good deal of money, and I feel certain my father, when he came to think of it, would scarce approve of my receiving them."

"And this from *you*, dear Lucy?"

"This from me, dear Miles," returned the precious girl, tears glistening in her eyes, though she endeavored to smile. "Now take the box, and we will be just as good friends as ever."

"Will you answer me one question as frankly and as honestly as you used to answer all my questions?"

Lucy turned pale, and she stood reflecting an instant before she spoke.

"I can answer no question before it is asked," was at length her answer.

"Have you thought so little of my present as to have thrown away the locket I gave you before I sailed for the northwest coast?"

"No, Miles; I have kept the locket, and shall keep it as long as I live. It was a memorial of our childish regard for each other, and in that sense is very dear to me. You will let me keep the locket, I am sure!"

"If it were not you, Lucy Hardinge, whom I know to be truth itself, I might be disposed to doubt you; so many strange things exist, and so much caprice, especially in attachments, is manifested here, ashore!"

"You need doubt nothing I tell you, Miles; on no account would I deceive you."

"That I believe—nay, I see it is your present object to *undeceive* me. I do not doubt anything *you* tell me, Lucy. I wish I could see that locket, however; show it to me, if you have it on your person."

Lucy made an eager movement, as if about to produce the locket; then she arrested the impetuous indication, while her cheeks fairly burned with the blushes that suffused them.

"I see how it is, Lucy; the thing is not to be found. It is mislaid, the Lord knows where, and you do not like to avow it."

The locket at that moment lay as near the blessed creature's heart as it could be placed, and her confusion proceeded from the shame of letting that fact be known. This I could not see, and consequently did not know. A very small and further indication of feeling on my part might have betrayed the circumstance, but pride prevented it, and I took the still extended box, I dare say in a somewhat dramatic manner. Lucy looked at me earnestly; I saw it was with difficulty that she kept from bursting into tears.

"You are not hurt, Miles?" she said.

"I should not be frank if I denied it. Even Emily Merton, you saw, consented to accept enough pearls for a ring."

"I did perceive it; and yet you remember she felt the impropriety of receiving such large gifts from gentlemen. Miss Merton has gone through so much, so much in your company, Miles, that no wonder she is willing to retain some little memorial of it all, until——"

She hesitated, but Lucy chose not to finish the sentence. She had been pale, but her cheeks were now like the rose again.

"When Rupert and I first went to sea, Lucy, you gave me your little treasure in gold; every farthing you had on earth, I fancy."

"I am glad I did, Miles; for we were very young then, and you had been so kind to me, I rejoice I had a little gratitude. But we are now in situations," she added, smiling so sweetly as to render it difficult

for me to refrain from catching her in my arms and folding her to my heart, "that place both of us above the necessity of receiving aid of this sort."

"I am glad to hear this, though *I* shall never part with the dear recollection of the half-joes."

"Or I with that of the locket. We will retain these then as keepsakes. My dear Mrs. Bradfort, too, is very particular about Rupert or myself receiving favors of this sort from any but herself. She has adopted us in a manner, and I owe to her liberality the means of making the figure I do. Apart from that, Miles, we are all as poor as we have ever been."

I wished Rupert had half his sister's self-respect and pride of character. But he had not; for, in spite of his kinswoman's prohibitions, he had not scrupled to spend nearly three years of the wages that accrued to me as third mate of the *Crisis*. For the money I cared not a stiver; it was a very different thing as to the feeling.

As for Lucy, she hastened away, as soon as she had induced me to accept the box; and I had no choice but to place all the pearls together, and put them in Grace's room, as my sister had desired me to do with her own property before proceeding on her walk.

I determined I would converse confidentially with Grace, that very evening, about the state of affairs in general, and, if possible, learn the worst concerning Mr. Andrew Drewett's pretensions. Shall I frankly own the truth? I was sorry that Mrs. Bradfort had made Lucy so independent; as it seemed to increase the chasm that I fancied was opening between us.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Your name abruptly mentioned, casual words
Of comment on your deeds, praise from your uncle,
News from the armies, talk of your return,
A word let fall touching your youthful passion
Suffused her cheek, called to her drooping eye
A momentary luster."—HILLHOUSE.

I HAD no difficulty in putting my project of a private interview with Grace in execution in my own house. There was one room at Clawbonny that, from time immemorial, had been appropriated exclusively to the use of the heads of the establishment. It was called the "family room," as one would say "family pictures" or "family plate." In my father's time, I could recollect that I never dreamed of entering it, unless asked or ordered; and even then, I always did so with some such feelings as I entered a church. What gave it a particular and additional sanctity in our eyes, also, was the fact that the Wallingford dead were always placed in their coffins in this room, and thence they were borne to their graves. It was a very small triangular room, with the fireplace in one corner, and possessing but a single window, that opened on a thicket of rose-bushes, syringas, and lilacs. There was also a light external fence around this shrubbery, as if purposely to keep listeners at a distance. The apartment had been furnished when the house was built, being in the oldest part of the structures, and still retained its ancient inmates. The chairs, tables, and most of the other articles, had actually been brought from England, by Miles the First, as we used to call the emigrant; though he was thus only in reference to the Clawbonny dynasty, having been something like Miles the Twentieth, in the old country. My mother had introduced a small settee, or some such seat as the French would call *causeuse;* a most appropriate article, in such a place.

In preparation for the interview I had slipped into Grace's hand a piece of paper on which was written, "Meet me in the family room, precisely at six!" This was sufficient; at the hour named, I proceeded to the room myself. The house of Clawbonny, in one sense, was large for an American residence; that is to say, it covered a great deal of ground, every one of the three owners who preceded me having built; the last two leaving entire the labors of the first. My turn had not yet come, of course; but the reader knows already that I, most irreverently, had once contemplated abandoning the place

for a "seat" nearer the Hudson. In such a *suite* of constructions, sundry passages became necessary, and we had several more than was usual at Clawbonny, besides having as many pairs of stairs. In consequence of this ample provision of stairs, the chambers of the family were totally separated from those of all the rest of the house.

I began to reflect seriously on *what* I had to say, and *how* it was to be said, as I walked through the long passage which led to the "family room," or the "triangle," as my own father had nicknamed the spot. Grace and I had never yet held what might be termed a family consultation; I was too young to think of such a thing, when last at home, and no former occasion had offered since my return. I was still quite young, and had more diffidence than might have been expected in a sailor. To me, it was far more embarrassing to open verbal communications of a delicate nature, than it would have been to work a ship in action.

But for this *mauvaise honte*, I do think I should have been explicit with Lucy, and not have parted from her on the piazza, as I did, leaving everything in just as much doubt as it had been before a word passed between us. Then I entertained a profound respect for Grace; something more than the tenderness of a brother for a sister; for, mingled with my strong affection for her, was a deference, a species of awe of her angel-like character and purity, that made me far more disposed to receive advice from her than to bestow it. In the frame of mind which was natural to all these blended feelings, I laid my hand on the old-fashioned brass latch, by which the door of the "triangle" was closed. On entering the room, I found my sister seated on the "causeuse," the window open to admit air, the room looking snug but cheerful, and its occupant's sweet countenance expressive of care, not altogether free from curiosity. The last time I had been in that room, it was to look on the pallid features of my mother's corpse, previously to closing the coffin. All the recollections of that scene rushed upon our minds at the same instant; and taking a place by the side of Grace, I put an arm around her waist, drew her to me, and, receiving her head on my bosom, she wept like a child. My tears could not be altogether restrained, and several minutes passed in profound silence. No explanations were needed; I knew what my sister thought and felt, and she was equally at home as respects my sensations. At length we regained our self-command, and Grace lifted her head.

"You have not been in this room since, brother?" she observed, half-inquiringly.

"I have not, sister. It is now many years—many for those who are as young as ourselves."

"Miles, you will think better about that 'seat,' and never abandon Clawbonny—never destroy this blessed room!"

"I begin to think and feel differently on the subject, from what I once did. If this house were good enough for our forefathers, why is it not good enough for me? It is respectable and comfortable, and what more do I want?"

"And so warm in winter, and so cool in summer; with good thick stone walls; while everything they build now is a shingle palace! Besides, you can add your portion, and each addition has already been a good deal modernized. It is so pleasant to have a house that partakes of the usages of different periods!"

"I hardly think I shall ever abandon Clawbonny, my dear; for I find it growing more and more precious as other ties and expectations fail me."

Grace drew herself entirely from my arms, and looked intently, and, as I fancied, anxiously at me, from the other corner of the settee. Then she affectionately took one of my hands in both her own, and pressed it gently.

"You are young to speak of such things, my dear brother," she said with a tone and air of sadness I had never yet remarked in her voice and manner; "much too young for a man; though I fear we women are born to know sorrow!"

I could not speak if I would, for I fancied Grace was about to make some communications concerning Rupert. Notwith-

standing the strong affection that existed between my sister and myself, not a syllable had ever been uttered by either, that bore directly on our respective relations with Rupert and Lucy Hardinge. I had long been certain that Rupert, who was never backward in professions, had years before spoken explicitly to Grace, and I made no doubt they were engaged, though probably subject to some such conditions as the approval of his father and myself; approvals that neither had any reason for supposing could be withheld. Still, Grace had never intimated anything of the sort, and my conclusions were drawn from conjectures founded as I imagined on sufficient observation. On the other hand, I had never spoken to Grace of my love for Lucy. Until within the last month, indeed, when jealousy and distrust came to quicken the sentiment, I was unconscious, myself, with how much passion I did actually love the dear girl; for, previously to that, my affection had seemed so much a matter of course, was united with so much that was fraternal, in appearance at least, that I had never been induced to enter into an inquiry as to the nature of this regard. We were both, therefore, touching on hallowed spots in our hearts, and each felt averse to laying bare the weakness.

"Oh! you know how it is with life, Grace," I answered, with affected carelessness, after a moment's silence; "now all sunshine, and now all clouds—I shall probably never marry, my dear sister, and you, or your children, will inherit Clawbonny; then you can do as you please with the house. As a memorial of myself, however, I will leave orders for stone to be got out this fall, and next year will put up the south wing, of which we have so much talked, and add three or four rooms in which one will not be ashamed to see his friends."

"I hope you are ashamed of nothing that is at Clawbonny, now, Miles—as for your marrying, my dear brother, that remains to be seen; young men do not often know their own minds on such a subject, at your age."

This was said, not altogether without pleasantry, though there was a shade of sadness in the countenance of the beloved speaker, that from the bottom of my heart I wished were not there. I believe Grace understood my concern, and that she shrunk with virgin sensitiveness from touching further on the subject, for she soon added—"Enough of this desponding talk. Why have you particularly desired to see me here, Miles?"

"Why? Oh! you know I am to sail next week, and we have never been here; and now we are both of an age to communicate our thoughts to each other, I supposed—that is—there must be a beginning of all things, and it is as well to commence now as any other time. You do not seem more than half a sister, in the company of strangers like the Mertons, and Hardinges!"

"Strangers, Miles! How long have you regarded the last as strangers?"

"Certainly not strangers in the way of acquaintance, but strangers to our blood. There is not the least connection between us and them."

"No, but much love; and love that has lasted from childhood. I cannot remember the time when I have not loved Lucy Hardinge."

"Quite true—nor I. Lucy is an excellent girl, and one is almost certain of always retaining a strong regard for *her*. How singularly the prospects of the Hardinges are changed by this sudden liking of Mrs. Bradfort!"

"It is not sudden, Miles. You have been absent years, and forget how much time there has been to become intimate and attached. Mr. Hardinge and Mrs. Bradfort are sisters' children; and the fortune of the last, which, I am told, exceeds six thousand a year, in improving real estate in town, besides the excellent and valuable house in which she lives, came from their common grandfather, who cut off Mrs. Hardinge with a small legacy, because she married a clergyman. Mr. Hardinge is Mrs. Bradfort's heir-at-law, and it is by no means unnatural that she should think of leaving the property to those who, in one sense, have as good a right to it as she has herself."

"And is it supposed she will leave Rupert her heir?"

"I believe it is—at least—I think—I am afraid—Rupert himself imagines it; though doubtless Lucy will come in for a fair share. The affection of Mrs. Bradfort for Lucy is very strong—so strong, indeed, that she offered, last winter, openly to adopt her, and to keep her with her constantly. You know how true and warm-hearted a girl Lucy is, and how easy it is to love her."

"This is all new to me—why was not the offer accepted?"

"Neither Mr. Hardinge nor Lucy would listen to it. I was present at the interview in which it was discussed, and our excellent guardian thanked his cousin for her kind intentions; but in his simple way, he declared, as long as life was spared him, he felt it a duty to keep his girl; or, at least, until he committed her to the custody of a husband, or death should part them."

"And Lucy?"

"She is much attached to Mrs. Bradfort, who is a good woman in the main, though she has her weaknesses about the world, and society, and such things. Lucy wept in her cousin's arms, but declared she never could leave her father. I suppose you do not expect," added Grace, smiling, "that *she* had anything to say about a husband."

"And how did Mrs. Bradfort receive this joint declaration of resistance to her pleasure, backed, as the last was, by dollars?"

"Perfectly well. The affair terminated by Mr. Hardinge's consenting to Lucy's passing each winter in town, until she marry. Rupert, you know, lives there as a student at law, at present, and will become established there, when admitted to the bar."

"And I suppose the knowledge that Lucy is likely to inherit some of the old Bleecker estate has not in the least diminished her chance of finding a husband to remove her from the paternal custody of her father?"

"No husband could ever make Lucy anything but Mr. Hardinge's daughter; but you are right, Miles, in supposing that she has been sought. I am not in her secrets, for Lucy is a girl of too much principle to make a parade of her conquests, even under the pretense of communicating them to her dearest friend—and in that light, beyond all question, does she regard me; but I feel as morally certain as one can be, without actually knowing the facts, that Lucy refused *one* gentleman winter before last, and three last winter."

"Was Mr. Andrew Drewett of the number?" I asked, with a precipitation of which I was immediately ashamed.

Grace started a little at the vivacity of my manner, and then she smiled, though I still thought sadly.

"Of course not," she answered, after a moment's thought, "or he would not still be in attendance. Lucy is too frank to leave an admirer in doubt an instant after his declaration is made and her own mind made up; and not one of all those who, I am persuaded, have offered, has ever ventured to continue more than a distant acquaintance. As Mr. Drewett never has been more assiduous than down to the last moment of our remaining in town, it is impossible he should have been rejected. I suppose you know Mr. Hardinge has invited him here?"

"Here? Andrew Drewett? And why is he coming here?"

"I heard him ask Mr. Hardinge's permission to visit us here; and you know how it is with our dear, good guardian—the milk of human kindness himself, and so perfectly guileless that he never sees more than is said in such matters, it was impossible he could refuse. Besides, he likes Drewett, who, apart from some fashionable follies, is both clever and respectable. Mr. Drewett has a sister married into one of the best families on the other side of the river, and is in the habit of coming into the neighborhood every summer; doubtless he will cross from his sister's house to Clawbonny."

I felt indignant for just one minute, and then reason resumed its sway. Mr. Hardinge, in the first place, had the written authority, or request, of my mother,

that he would invite whom he pleased, during my minority, to the house; and, on that score, I felt no disapprobation. But it seemed so much like braving my own passion, to ask an open admirer of Lucy's to my own house, that I was very near saying something silly. Luckily I did not, and Grace never knew what I suffered at this discovery. Lucy had refused several offers—that was something; and I was dying to know what sort of offers they were. I thought I might at least venture to ask that question.

"Did you know the four gentlemen that you suppose Lucy to have refused?" said I, with as indifferent an air as I could assume, affecting to destroy a cobweb with my rattan, and even carrying my acting so far as to make an attempt at a low whistle.

"Certainly; how else should I know anything about it? Lucy has never said a word to me on the subject; and, though Mrs. Bradfort and I have had our pleasantries on the subject, neither of us is in Lucy's secrets."

"Ay, your pleasantries on the subject! That I dare say. There is no better fun to a woman than to see a man make a fool of himself in this way; little does *she* care how much a poor fellow suffers!"

Grace turned pale, and I could see that her sweet countenance became thoughtful and repentant.

"Perhaps there is truth in your remark, and justice in your reproach, Miles. None of us treat this subject with as much seriousness as it deserves, though I cannot suppose any woman can reject a man whom she believes to be seriously attached to her, without feeling for him. Still, attachments of this nature affect your sex less than ours, and I believe few men die of love. Lucy, moreover, never has, and I believe never would encourage any man whom she did not like; this principle must have prevented any of that intimate connection, without which the heart never can get much interested. The passion that is produced without any exchange of sentiment or feeling, Miles, cannot be much more than imagination or caprice."

"I suppose those four chaps are all famously cured by this time, then!" said I, pretending again to whistle.

"I cannot answer for that; it is so easy to love Lucy, and to love her warmly. I only know they visit her no longer, and when they meet her in society behave just as I think a rejected admirer would behave when he has not lost his respect for his late flame. Mrs. Bradfort's fortune and position may have had their influence on two, but the others, I think, were quite sincere."

"Mrs. Bradfort is quite in a high set, Grace, altogether above what we have been accustomed to."

My sister colored a little, and I could see she was not at her ease. Still, Grace had too much self-respect, and too much character, ever to feel an oppressive inferiority where it did not exist in essentials; and she had never been made to suffer, as the more frivolous and vain often suffer, by communication with a class superior to their own—especially when that class, as always happens, contains those who, having nothing else to be proud of, take care to make others feel their inferiority."

"This is true, Miles," she answered; "or I might better say both are true. Certainly I never have seen as many well-bred persons as I meet in her circle; indeed we have little around us at Clawbonny to teach us any distinctions in such tastes. Mr. Hardinge, simple as he is, is so truly a gentleman, that he has not left us altogether in the dark as to what was expected of us; and I fancy the higher people truly are in the world, the less they lay stress on anything but what is substantial in these matters."

"And Lucy's admirers—and Lucy herself——"

"How, Lucy herself?"

"Was she well received—courted—admired? Met as an equal, and treated as an equal? And you, too?"

"Had you lived more in the world, Miles, you would not have asked the question. But Lucy has been always received as Mrs. Bradfort's daughter would have been received; and as for myself, I have

never supposed it was known exactly who I am."

"*Captain* Miles Wallingford's daughter, and *Captain* Miles Wallingford's sister," said I, with a little bitterness on each emphasis.

"Precisely; and a girl proud of her connections with both," rejoined Grace, with strong affection.

"I wish I knew one thing, Grace; and I think I *ought* to know it, too."

"If you can make the last appear, Miles, you may rest assured you shall know it, if it depend on me."

"Did any of these gentry—these soft-handed fellows—ever think of offering to *you?*"

Grace laughed, and she colored so deeply—oh! how heavenly was her beauty, with that roseate tint on her cheek! —but she colored so deeply that I felt satisfied that she, too, had refused her suitors. The thought appeased some of my bitter feelings, and I had a thought of semi-savage pleasure in believing that a daughter of Clawbonny was not to be had for the asking, by one of that set. The only answers I got were these disclosures by blushes.

"What are the fortune and position of this Mr. Drewett, since you are resolved to tell me nothing of your own affairs?"

"Both are good, and such as no young lady can object to; he is even said to be rich."

"Thank God! *He* then is not seeking Lucy in the hope of getting some of Mrs. Bradfort's money?"

"Not in the least. It is so easy to love Lucy for Lucy's sake, that even a fortune-hunter would be in danger of being caught in his own trap. But Mr. Drewett is above the necessity of practicing so vile a scheme for making money."

Here, that the present generation may not be misled, and imagine fortune-hunting has come in altogether within the last twenty years, I will add that it was not exactly a trade in this country—a regular occupation—in 1802, as it has become in 1844. There were such things then, certainly, as men or women who were ready to marry anybody who would make them rich, but I do not think theirs was a calling to which either sex served regular apprenticeships as is practiced to-day. Still, the business was carried on, to speak in the vernacular, and sometimes with marked success.

"You have not told me, Grace," I resumed, "whether you think Lucy is pleased or not with the attentions of this gentleman."

My sister looked at me intently, for a moment, as if to ascertain how far I could, or could not, ask such a question with indifference. It will be remembered that no verbal explanations had ever taken place between us on the subject of our feelings toward the companions of our childhood, and that all that was known to either was obtained purely by inference. Between myself and Lucy nothing had ever passed, indeed, which might not have been honestly referred to our long and early association, so far as the rules of intercourse were concerned, though I sometimes fancied I could recall a hundred occasions on which Lucy had formerly manifested deep attachment for myself; nor did I doubt her being able to show similar proofs by reversing the picture. This, however, was, or I had thought it to be, merely the language of the heart; the tongue having never spoken. Of course, Grace had nothing but conjecture on this subject, and alas! she had begun to see how possible it was for those who lived near each other to change their views on such subjects; no wonder, then, if she fancied it still easier for those who had been separated for years.

"I have not told you, Miles," Grace answered after a brief delay, "because it would not be proper to communicate the secrets of my friend to a young man, even to *you*, were it in my power, as it is not, since Lucy never has made to me the slightest confidential communications of any sort or nature, touching love."

"Never!" I exclaimed—reading my fancied doom in the startling fact; for I conceived it impossible, had she ever really loved me, that the matter should not have come up in conversation between two so closely united. "Never! What,

no girlish—no childish preference—have you never had any mutual preferences to reveal?"

"Never," answered Grace firmly, though her very temples seemed illuminated. "Never. We have been satisfied with each other's affection, and have had no occasion to enter into any unfeminine and improper secrets, if any such existed."

A long, and I doubt not a mutually painful pause succeeded.

"Grace," said I, at length, "I am not envious of this probable accession of fortune to the Hardinges, but I think we should all have been much more united—much happier—without it."

My sister's color left her face, she trembled all over, and she became pale as death.

"You may be right in some respects, Miles," she answered, after a time. "And yet it is hardly generous to think so. Why should we wish to see our oldest friends—those who are so very dear to us, our excellent guardian's children, less well off than we are ourselves? No doubt, no doubt, it may seem better to us, that Clawbonny should be the castle and we its possessors; but others have their rights and interests as well as ourselves. Give the Hardinges money, and they will enjoy every advantage known in this country—more than money can possibly give us—why, then, ought we to be so selfish as to wish them deprived of this advantage? Place Lucy where you will she will always be Lucy; and as for Rupert, so brilliant a young man needs only an opportunity to rise to anything the country possesses!"

Grace was so earnest, spoke with so much feeling, appeared so disinterested, so holy I had almost said, that I could not find in my heart the courage to try her any further. That she began to distrust Rupert, I plainly saw, though it was merely with the glimmerings of doubt. A nature as pure as hers, and a heart so true, admitted with great reluctance the proofs of the unworthiness of one so long loved. It was evident, moreover, that she shrunk from revealing her own great secret, while she had only conjectures to offer in regard to Lucy; and even these she withheld, as due to her sex, and the obligation of friendship. I forgot that I had not been ingenuous myself, and that I made no communication to justify any confidence on the part of my sister. That which would have been treachery in her to say, under this state of the case, might have been uttered with greater frankness on my own part. After a pause, to allow my sister to recover from her agitation, I turned the discourse to our own more immediate family interests, and soon got off the painful subject altogether.

"I shall be of age, Grace," I said, in the course of my explanations, "before you see me again. We sailors are always exposed to more chances and hazards than people ashore; and I now tell you, should anything happen to me, my will may be found in my secretary; signed and sealed, the day I attain my majority. I have given orders to have it drawn up by a lawyer of eminence, and shall take it to sea with me, for that very purpose."

"From which I am to infer that I must not covet Clawbonny," answered Grace, with a smile that denoted how little she cared for the fact. "You give it to our cousin, Jack Wallingford, as a male heir, worthy of enjoying the honor."

"No, dearest, I give it to *you*. It is true, the law would do this for me; but I choose to let it be known that I wish it to be so. I am aware my father made that disposition of the place, should I die childless before I became of age; but, once of age, the place is all mine; and that which is all mine, shall be all thine, after I am no more."

"This is melancholy conversation, and, I trust, useless. Under the circumstances you mention, Miles, I never should have expected Clawbonny, nor do I know I ought to possess it. It comes as much from Jack Wallingford's ancestors, as from our own; and it is better it should remain with the name. I will not promise you, therefore, I will not give it to him, the instant I can."

This Jack Wallingford, of whom I have not yet spoken, was a man of five-and-forty, and a bachelor. He was a cousin-german of my father's, being the son of a

younger brother of my grandfather's, and somewhat of a favorite. He had gone into what was called the new countries, in that day, or a few miles west of Cayuga Bridge, which put him into Western New York. I had never seen him but once, and that was on a visit he paid us on his return from selling quantities of pot and pearl ashes in town; articles made on his new lands. He was said to be a prosperous man, and to stand little in need of the old paternal property.

After a little more conversation on the subject of my will, Grace and I separated, each more closely bound to the other, I firmly believed, for this dialogue in the "family room." Never had my sister seemed more worthy of all my love; and, certain I am, never did she possess more of it. Of Clawbonny she was as sure as my power over it could make her.

The remainder of the week passed as weeks are apt to pass in the country, and in summer. Feeling myself so often uncomfortable in the society of the girls, I was much in the fields; always possessing the good excuse of beginning to look after my own affairs. Mr. Hardinge took charge of the major, an intimacy beginning to spring up between these two respectable old men. There were, indeed, so many points of common feeling, that such a result was not at all surprising. They both loved the Church—I beg pardon, the Holy Catholic Protestant Episcopal Church. They both disliked Bonaparte—the major hated him, but my guardian hated nobody—both venerated Billy Pitt, and both fancied the French Revolution was merely the fulfillment of prophecy, through the agency of the devils. As we are now touching upon times likely to produce important results, let me not be misunderstood. As an old man, aiming, in a new sphere, to keep enlightened the generation that is coming into active life, it may be necessary to explain. An attempt has been made to induce the country to think that Episcopalian and tory were something like synonymous terms, in the "times that tried men's souls." This is sufficiently impudent *per se*, in a country that possessed Washington, Jay, Hamilton, the Lees, the Morrises, the late Bishop White, and so many other distinguished patriots of the Southern and Middle States; but men are not particularly scrupulous when there is an object to be obtained, even though it be pretended that heaven is an incident of that object. I shall, therefore, confine my explanations to what I have said about Billy Pitt and the French.

The youth of this day may deem it suspicious that an Episcopal divine—*Protestant* Episcopal, I mean; but it is *so* hard to get the use of new terms as applied to old thoughts, in the decline of life!—may deem it suspicious that a Protestant Episcopal divine should care anything about Billy Pitt, or execrate infidel France; I will, therefore, just intimate that, in 1802, no portion of the country dipped more deeply into similar sentiments than the descendants of those who first put foot on the rock of Plymouth, and whose progenitors had just before paid a visit to Geneva, where, it is "said or sung," they had found a "church without a bishop, and a state without a king." In a word, admiration of Mr. Pitt, and execration of Bonaparte, were by no means such novelties in America, in that day, as to excite wonder. For myself, however, I can truly say, that, like most Americans who went abroad in those stirring times, I was ready to say with Mercutio, "a plague on both your houses;" for neither was even moderately honest, or even decently respectful to ourselves. Party feeling, however, the most inexorable, and the most unprincipled, of all tyrants, and the bane of American liberty, notwithstanding all our boasting, decreed otherwise; and while one-half the American republic was shouting hosannas to the Great Corsican, the other half was ready to hail Pitt as the "Heaven-born Minister." The remainder of the nation felt and acted as Americans should. It was my own private opinion, that France and England would have been far better off, had neither of these worthies ever had a being.

Nevertheless, the union of opinion between the divine and the major was a great bond of union in friendship. I saw

they were getting on well together, and let things take their course. As for Emily, I cared very little about her, except as she might prove to be connected with Rupert, and through Rupert with the happiness of my sister. As for Rupert, himself, I could not get entirely weaned from one whom I had so much loved in boyhood, and who, moreover, possessed the rare advantage of being Lucy's brother and Mr. Hardinge's son. "Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother," gave him a value in my eyes that he had long ceased to possess on his own account.

"You see, Neb," I said, toward the end of the week, as the black and I were walking up from the mill in company, "Mr. Rupert has altogether forgotten that he ever knew the name of a rope in a ship. His hands are as white as a young lady's!"

"Nebber mind dat, Masser Mile. Masser Rupert nebber feel a saterfaction to be wracked away, or to be prisoner to Injin! Golly! No gentleum to be envy, sir, 'em doesn't enjoy *dat!*"

"You have a queer taste, Neb, from all which I conclude you expect to return to town with me in the *Wallingford*, this evening, and to go out in the *Dawn?*"

"Sartain, Masser Mile. How you t'ink of goin' to sea, and leave nigger at home?"

Here Neb raised such a laugh that he might have been heard a hundred rods, seeming to fancy the idea he had suggested was so preposterous as to merit nothing but ridicule.

"Well, Neb, I consent to your wishes; but this will be the last voyage in which you will have to consult me on the subject, as I shall make out your freedom papers the moment I am of age."

"What dem?" demanded the black, quick as lightning.

"Why, papers to make you your own master—a free man; you surely know what that means. Did you never hear of free niggers?"

"Sartain—awful poor debble dey be, too. You catch Neb, one day, at being a free nigger, gib you leave to tell him ov it, Masser Mile!"

Here was another burst of laughter that sounded like a chorus in merriment.

"This is a little extraordinary, Neb! I thought, boy, all slaves pined for freedom?"

"P'raps so; p'raps not. What good he do, Masser Mile, when heart and body well satisfy as it is. Now, how long a Wallingford family lib, here, in this berry spot?" Neb always talked more like a "nigger" when within hearing of the household gods than he did at sea.

"How long? About a hundred years, Neb—just one hundred and seven, I believe, to be accurate."

"And how long a Clawbonny family, at 'e same time, Masser Mile?"

"Upon my word, Neb, your pedigree is a little confused, and I cannot answer quite as certainly. Eighty or ninety, though, I should think, at least; and, possibly, a hundred, too. Let me see—you called old Pompey your grandfather; did you not, Neb?"

"Sart'in; berry good grandfader, too, Masser Mile. Ole Pomp a won'erful black!"

"Oh! I say nothing touching the quality; I dare say he was as good as another. Well, I think that I have heard old Pompey's grandfather was an imported Guinea, and that he was purchased by my great-grandfather, about the year 1700."

"Dat just as good as gospel! Who want to make up lie about poor debble of nigger? Well, den, Masser Mile, in all dem 1700 year, did he ebber hear of a Clawbonny, that want to be a free nigger? Tell me dat, at once, an' I hab an answer."

"You have asked me more than I can answer, boy; for I am not in the secret of your wishes, much less in those of all your ancestors."

Neb pulled off his tarpaulin, scratched his wool, rolled his black eyes at me, as if he enjoyed the manner in which he had puzzled me; after which he set off on a tumbling excursion, in the road, going like a wheel on his hands and feet, showing his teeth like rows of pearls, and concluding the whole with roar the third, that

sounded as if the hills and valleys were laughing in the very fatness of their fertility. The physical *tour de force* was one of those feats of agility in which Neb had been my instructor, ten years before.

"S'pose I free, who do sich matter for you, Masser Mile?" cried Neb, like one laying down an unanswerable proposition. "No, no, sir—I belong to you, you belong to me, and we belong to one anodder."

This settled the matter for the present, and I said no more. Neb was ordered to be in readiness for the next day; and at the appointed hour, I met the assembled party to take my leave, on this, my third departure from the roof of my fathers. It had been settled the major and Emily were to remain at the farm until July, when they were to proceed to the Springs, for the benefit of the water, after living so long in a hot climate. I had passed an hour with my guardian alone, and he had no more to say than to wish me well, and to bestow his blessing. I did not venture an offer to embrace Lucy. It was the first time we had parted without this token of affection; but I was shy, and I fancied she was cold. She offered me her hand, as frankly as ever, however, and I pressed it fervently, as I wished her adieu. As for Grace, she wept in my arms, just as she had always done; and the major and Emily shook hands cordially with me, it being understood I should find them in New York, at my return. Rupert accompanied me down to the sloop.

"If you should find an occasion, Miles, let us hear from you," said my old friend. "I have a lively curiosity to learn something of the Frenchmen; nor am I entirely without the hope of soon gratifying the desire, in person."

"You! If you have any intention to visit France, what better opportunity than to go in my cabin? Is it business that will take you there?"

"Not at all; pure pleasure. Our excellent cousin thinks a gentleman of a certain class ought to travel; and I believe she has an idea of getting me attached to the legation in some form or other."

This sounded so odd to me! Rupert Hardinge, who had not one penny to rub against another, so lately, was now talking of his European tour, and of legations! I ought to have been glad of his good fortune, and I fancied I was. I said nothing, this time, concerning his taking up any portion of my earnings, having the sufficient excuse of not being on pay myself. Rupert did not stay long in the sloop, and we were soon under way. I looked eagerly along the high banks of the creek, fringed as it was with bushes, in hopes of seeing Grace, at least; nor was I disappointed. She and Lucy had taken a direct path to the point where the two waters united, and were standing there, as the sloop dropped past. They both waved their handkerchiefs, in a way to show the interest they felt in me; and I returned the parting salutations by kissing my hand again and again. At this instant, a sail-boat passed our bows, and I saw a gentleman standing up in it, waving his handkerchief, quite as industriously as I was kissing my hand. A look told me it was Andrew Drewett, who directed his boat to the point, and was soon making his bows to the girls in person. His boat ascended the creek, no doubt with his luggage; while the last I saw of the party it was walking off in company, taking the direction of the house.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Or feeling, as the storm increases,
The love of terror nerve thy breast,
Didst venture to the coast:
To see the mighty war-ship leap
From wave to wave upon the deep,
Like chamois goat from steep to steep,
Till low in valley lost."—ALLSTON.

ROGER TALCOTT had not been idle during my absence. Clawbonny was so dear to me that I had stayed longer than was proposed in the original plan; and I now found the hatches on the *Dawn*, a crew shipped, and nothing remaining but to clear out. I mean the literal thing, and not the slang phrase, one of those of which so many have crept into the American language, through the shop, and which even find their way into print; such

as "charter coaches," "on a boat," "on board a stage," and other similar elegances. "*On* a boat" always makes me ——even at my present time of life. The *Dawn* was cleared the day I reached town.

Several of the crew of the *Crisis* had shipped with us anew, the poor fellows having already made away with all their wages and prize money, in the short space of a month! This denoted the usual improvidence of sailors, and was thought nothing out of the common way. The country being at peace, a difficulty with Tripoli excepted, it was no longer necessary for ships to go armed. The sudden excitement produced by the brush with the French had already subsided, and the navy was reduced to a few vessels that had been regularly built for the service; while the list of officers had been curtailed of two-thirds of their names. We were no longer a warlike, but were fast getting to be a strictly commercial, body of seamen. I had a single six-pounder, and half a dozen muskets, in the *Dawn*, besides a pair or two of pistols, with just ammunition enough to quell a mutiny, fire a few signal-guns, or to kill a few ducks.

We sailed on the 3d of July. I have elsewhere intimated that the Manhattanese hold exaggerated notions of the comparative beauty of the scenery of their port, sometimes presuming to compare it even with Naples; to the bay of which it bears some such resemblanee as a Dutch canal bears to a river flowing through rich meadows, in the freedom and grace of Nature. Nevertheless, there *are* times and seasons when the bay of New York offers a landscape worthy of any pencil. It was at one of these felicitous moments that the *Dawn* cast off from the wharf, and commenced her voyage to Bordeaux. There was barely air enough from the southward to enable us to handle the ship, and we profited by a morning ebb to drop down to the Narrows, in the midst of a fleet of some forty sail; most of the latter, however, being coasters. Still we were a dozen ships and brigs, bound to almost as many different countries. The little air there was seemed scarcely to touch the surface of the water; and the broad expanse of bay was as placid as an inland lake of a summer's morning. Yes, yes—there are moments when the haven of New York does present pictures on which the artist would seize with avidity; but the instant Nature attempts any of her grander models, on this, a spot that seems never to rise much above the level of commercial excellences, it is found that the accessories are deficient in sublimity, or even beauty.

I have never seen our home waters so lovely as on this morning. The movements of the vessels gave just enough of life and variety to the scene to destroy the appearance of sameness; while the craft were too far from the land to prevent one of the most unpleasant effects of the ordinary landscape scenery of the place—that produced by the disproportion between the tallness of their spars, and the low character of the adjacent shores. As we drew near the Narrows, the wind increased; and forty sail, working through the pass in close conjunction, terminated the piece with something like the effect produced by a *finale* in an overture. The brightness of the morning, the placid charms of the scenery, and the propitious circumstances under which I commenced the voyage, in a commercial point of view, had all contributed to make me momentarily forget my private griefs, and to enter cheerfully into the enjoyment of the hour.

I greatly disliked passengers. They appeared to me to lessen the dignity of my position, and to reduce me to the level of an innkeeper, or one who received boarders. I wished to command a ship, not to take in lodgers; persons whom you are bound to treat with a certain degree of consideration, and in one sense, as your superiors. Still, it had too much of an appearance of surliness, and a want of hospitality, to refuse a respectable man a passage across the ocean, when he might not get another chance in a month, and that too when it was important to himself to proceed immediately. In this particular instance, I became the dupe of a mistaken kindness on the part of my former owners. These

gentlemen brought to me Mr. Brigham—Wallace Mortimer Brigham was his whole name, to be particular—as a person who was desirous of getting to France with his wife and wife's sister, in order to proceed to Italy for the health of the married lady, who was believed to be verging on a decline. These people were from the eastward, and had fallen into the old error of Americans, that the south of France and Italy had residences far more favorable for such a disease than our own country. This was one of the provincial notions of the day, that were entailed on us by means of colonial dependency. I suppose the colonial existence is as necessary to a people as childhood and adolescence are to the man; but as my Lady Mary Wortley Montagu told her friend, Lady Rich—"Nay; but look you, my dear madam, I grant it a very fine thing to continue always fifteen; *that*, everybody must approve of—it is quite fair, but, indeed, one need not be five years old."

I was prevailed on to take these passengers, and I got a specimen of their characters as we dropped down the bay, in the midst of the agreeable scene to which I have just alluded. They were *gossips;* and that, too, of the lowest, or personal caste. Nothing made them so happy as to be talking of the private concerns of their fellow-creatures; and, as ever must happen where this propensity exists, nine-tenths of what they said rested on no better foundation than surmises, inferences drawn from premises of questionable accuracy, and judgments that were entered up without the authority, or even the inclination, to examine witnesses. They had also a peculiarity that I have often remarked in persons of the same propensity; most of their gossiping arose from a desire to make apparent their own intimacy with the private affairs of people of mark—overlooking the circumstance that, in thus making the concerns of others the subjects of their own comments, they were impliedly admitting a consciousness of their own inferiority; men seldom condescending thus to busy themselves with the affairs of any but those of whom they feel it to be a sort of distinction to converse. I am much afraid good-breeding has more to do with the suppression of this vice than good principles, as the world goes. I have remarked that persons of a high degree of self-respect, and a good tone of manners, are quite free from this defect of character; while I regret to be compelled to say that I have been acquainted with divers very saintly *professors*, including one or two parsons, who have represented the very *beau idéal* of scandal.

My passengers gave me a taste of their quality, as I have said, before we had got a mile below Governor's Island. The ladies were named Sarah and Jane; and between them and Wallace Mortimer, what an insight did I obtain into the private affairs of sundry personages of Salem, in Massachusetts, together with certain glimpses in at Boston folks; all, however, referring to qualities and facts that might be classed among the real or supposed. I can at this distant day, recall Scene 1st, Act 1st, of the drama that continued while we were crossing the ocean, with the slight interruption of a few days produced by sea-sickness.

"Wallace," said Sarah, "did you say, yesterday, that John Viner had refused to lend his daughter's husband twenty thousand dollars, to get him out of his difficulties, and that he failed in consequence?"

"To be sure. It was the common talk through Wall Street yesterday, and everybody believes it"—there was no more truth in the story than in one of the forty reports that have killed General Jackson so often in the last twenty years. "Yes, no one doubts it—but all the Viners are just so! All of us, in our part of the world, know what to think of the Viners."

"Yes, I suppose so," drawled Jane. "I've heard it said this John Viner's father ran all the way from the Common in Boston, to the foot of State Street, to get rid of a dun against this very son, who had his own misfortunes when he was young."

"The story is quite likely true in part," replied Wallace, "though it can't be *quite*

accurate, as the old gentleman had but one leg, and *running* was altogether out of the question with *him*. It was probably old Tim Viner, who ran like a deer when a young man, as I've heard people say."

"Well, then, I suppose he ran his horse," added Jane, in the same quiet, drawling tone. "*Something* must have run, or they never would have got up the story."

I wondered if Miss Jane Hitchcock had ever taken the trouble to ascertain who *they* were! I happened to know both the Viners, and to be quite certain there was not a word of truth in the report of the twenty thousand dollars, having heard all the particulars of the late failure from one of my former owners, who was an assignee and a considerable creditor. Under the circumstances, I thought I would hint as much. "Are you quite sure that the failure of Viner & Co. was owing to the circumstance you mention, Mr. Brigham?" I inquired.

"Pretty certain. I am '*measurably acquainted*' with their affairs, and think I am tolerably safe in saying so."

Now "measurably acquainted" meant that he lived within twenty or thirty miles of those who *did* know something of the concerns of the house in question, and was in the way of catching scraps of the gossip that fell from the disappointed creditors. How much of this is there in this good country of ours! Men who live just near enough to one another to feel the influence of all that rivalry, envy, personal strifes and personal malignancies can generate, fancy they are acquainted, from this circumstance, with those to whom they have never even spoken. One half the idle tales that circulate up and down the land come from authority not one tittle better than this. How much would men learn, could they only acquire the healthful lesson of understanding that *nothing* which is much out of the ordinary way, and which circulates as received truths illustrative of character, is true in *all* its material parts, and very little in any. But, to return to my passengers, and that portion of their conversation which most affected myself. They continued commenting on persons and families by name, seemingly more to keep their hands in, than for any other discoverable reason, as each appeared to be perfectly conversant with all the gossip that was started; when Sarah casually mentioned the name of Mrs. Bradfort, with some of whose *supposed* friends, it now came out, they had all a general visiting acquaintance.

"Dr. Hosack is of opinion she cannot live long, I hear," said Jane, with a species of fierce delight in killing a fellow-creature, provided it only led to a gossip concerning her private affairs. "Her case has been decided to be a cancer, now, for more than a week, and she made her will last Tuesday."

"Only last Tuesday?" exclaimed Sarah, in surprise. "Well, I heard she had made her will a twelvemonth since, and that she left all her property to young Rupert Hardinge; in the expectation, some persons thought, that he might marry her."

"How could that be, my dear?" asked the husband; "in what would she be better off for leaving her own property to her husband?"

"Why, by law, would she not? I don't exactly know how it would happen, for I do not particularly understand these things; but it seems natural that a woman would be a gainer if she made the man she was about to marry her heir. She would have her thirds in his estate, would she not?"

"But, Mrs. Brigham," said I, smiling, "is it quite certain Mrs. Bradfort wishes to marry Rupert Hardinge, at all?"

"I know so little of the parties, that I cannot speak with certainty in the matter, I admit, Captain Wallingford."

"Well, but Sarah, dear," interposed the more exacting Jane, "you are making yourself unnecessarily ignorant. You very well know how intimate we are with the Greenes, and they know the Winters perfectly well, who are next-door neighbors to Mrs. Bradfort. I don't see how you can say we haven't good means of being 'measurably' well informed."

Now I happened to know, through

Grace and Lucy, that a disagreeable old person of the name of Greene did live next door to Mrs. Bradfort; but that the latter refused to visit her, firstly, because she did not happen to like her, and secondly, because the two ladies belonged to very different social circles; a sufficient excuse for not visiting in town, even though the parties inhabited the same house. But the Brighams, being Salem people, did not understand that families might reside next door to each other, in a large town, for a long series of months, or even years, and not know each other's names. It would not be easy to teach this truth, one of everyday occurrence, to the inhabitant of one of our provincial towns, who was in the habit of fancying he had as close an insight into the private affairs of all his neighbors, as they enjoyed themselves.

"No doubt we are all as well off as most strangers in New York," observed the wife; "still, it ought to be admitted that we may be mistaken. I have heard it said there is an old Mr. Hardinge, a clergyman, who would make a far better match for the lady than his son. However, it is of no great moment, now, for, when our neighbor, Mrs. John Foote, saw Doctor Hosack about her own child, she got all the particulars out of him about Mrs. Bradfort's case, from the highest quarter, and I had it from Mrs. Foote, herself."

"I could not have believed that a physician of Doctor Hosack's eminence and character would speak openly of the diseases of his patients," I observed, a little tartly, I am afraid.

"Oh! he didn't," said Sarah, eagerly—"he was as cunning as a fox, Mrs. Foote owned herself, and played her off finely; but Mrs. Foote was cunninger than any half-dozen foxes, and got it all out of him by negations."

"Negations!" I exclaimed, wondering what was meant by the term, though I had understood I was to expect a little more philosophy and metaphysics, not to say algebra, in my passengers, than usually accompanied petticoats in our part of the world.

"Certainly, *negations*," answered the matrons, with a smile as complacent as that which usually denotes the consciousness of intellectual superiority. "One who is a little practiced can ascertain a fact as well by means of negatives as affirmatives. It only requires judgment and use."

"Then Mrs. Bradfort's desease is only ascertained by the negative process?"

"So I suppose—but what does one want more?" put in the husband; "and that she made her will last week, I feel quite sure, as it was generally spoken of among our friends."

Here were people who had been in New York only a month, looking out for a ship, mere passengers as it might be, who knew more about a family, with which I had myself such an intimate connection, than its own members. I thought it no wonder that such a race was capable of enlightening mankind, on matters and things in general. But the game did not end here.

"I suppose Miss Lucy Hardinge will get something by Mrs. Bradfort's death," observed Miss Jane, "and that she and Mr. Andrew Drewett will marry as soon as it shall become proper."

Here was a speculation for a man in my state of mind! The names were all right; some of the incidents, even, were probable, if not correct; yet how could the facts be known to these comparative strangers? Did the art of gossiping, with all its meanness, lies, devices, inventions, and cruelties, really possess so much advantage over the intercourse of the confiding and honest, as to enable those who practice it to discover facts hidden from eye-witnesses, and eye-witnesses, too, that had every inducement of the strongest interest in the issue, not to be deceived? I felt satisfied, the moment Mrs. Greene's name was mentioned, that my passengers were not in the true New York set; and, justly enough, inferred they were not very good authority for one-half they said; and, yet, how could they know anything of Drewett's attachment to Lucy, unless their information were tolerably accurate?

I shall not attempt to repeat all that passed while the ship dropped down the

bay; but enough escaped the gossips to render me still more unhappy than I had yet been, on the subject of Lucy. I could and did despise these people—that was easy enough; but it was not so easy to forget all that they had said and surmised. This is one of the curses attendant on the habit of loose talking; one never knowing what to credit, and what not. In spite of all my disgust, and a firm determination not to contribute in any manner to the stock in trade of these people, I found great difficulty in evading their endless questions. How much they got out of me, by means of the process of negations, I never knew; but they got no great matter through direct affirmatives. Something, however, persons so indefatigable, to whom gossiping was the great aim of life, must obtain, and they ascertained that Mr. Hardinge was my guardian, that Rupert and I had passed our boyhoods in each other's company, and that Lucy was even an inmate of my own house the day we sailed. This little knowledge only excited a desire for more, and by the end of a week, I was obliged to submit to devices and expedients to pump me, than which even the thumbscrew was scarcely more efficient. I practiced on the negative system, myself, with a good deal of dexterity, however, and threw my inquisitors off, very handsomely, more than once, until I discovered that Wallace Mortimer, determined not to be baffled, actually opened communications with Neb, in order to get a clearer insight into my private affairs. After this, I presume my readers will not care to hear any more about these gentry, whose only connection with my life grew out of the misgivings they contributed largely to create in my mind touching the state of Lucy's affections. This much they did effect, and I was compelled to submit to their power. We are all of us, more or less, the dupes of knaves and fools.

All this, however, was the fruits of several weeks' intercourse, and I have anticipated events a little in order to make the statements in connection. Meeting a breeze, as has been said already, the *Dawn* got over the bar about two o'clock, and stood off the land, on an easy bowline, in company with the little fleet of square-rigged vessels that went out at the same time. By sunset Navesink again dipped, and I was once more fairly at sea.

This was at the period when the commerce of America was at its height. The spirit shown by the young republic in the French affair had commanded a little respect, though the supposed tendencies of the new administration were causing anything but a cordial feeling toward the country to exist in England. That powerful nation, however, had made a hollow peace with France the previous March, and the highway of nations was temporarily open to all ships alike, a state of things that existed for some ten months after we sailed. Nothing to be apprehended, consequently, lay before me, beyond the ordinary dangers of the ocean. For these last I was now prepared by the experience of several years passed almost entirely on board ship, during which time I had encircled the earth itself in my peregrinations.

Our run off the coast was favorable, and the sixth day out we were in the longitude of the tail of the Grand Bank. I was delighted with my ship, which turned out to be even more than I had dared to hope for. She behaved well under all circumstances, sailing even better than she worked. The first ten days of our passage were prosperous, and we were mid-ocean by the 10th of the month. During this time I had nothing to annoy me but the ceaseless *cancans* of my passengers. I had heard the name of every individual of note in Salem, with certain passages in his or her life, and began to fancy I had lived a twelvemonth in the place. At length I began to speculate on the reason why this morbid propensity should exist so much stronger in that part of the world than in any other I had visited. There was nothing new in the disposition of the people of small places to gossip, and it was often done in large towns, more especially those that did not possess the tone of a capital. Lady Mary

Wortley Montagu and Horace Walpole wrote gossip, but it was spiced with wit, as is usual with the scandal of such places as London and Paris; whereas this to which I was doomed to listen was nothing more than downright impertinent, vulgar meddling with the private affairs of all those whom the gossips thought of sufficient importance to talk about.

At Clawbonny we had our gossip, too, but it was innocent, seldom infringed much on the truth, and usually respected the right of every person to possess certain secrets that might remain inviolate to the world. No such rules prevailed with my passengers. Like a certain editor of a newspaper of my acquaintance, who acts as if he fancied all things in heaven and earth were created expressly to furnish materials for "paragraphs," they appeared to think that everybody of their acquaintance existed for no other purpose than to furnish them food for conversation. There must have been some unusual cause for so much personal *espionage*, and at length I came to the following conclusion on the subject. I had heard that church government among the Puritans descended into all the details of life; that it was a part of their religious duty to watch over each other, jog the memories of the delinquents, and serve God by ferreting out vice. This is a terrible inducement to fill the mind with the motes of a neighborhood, and the mind thus stowed, as we sailors say, will be certain to deliver a cargo. Then come the institutions, with their never-ending elections, and the construction that has been put on the right of the elector to inquire into all things; the whole consummated by the journals, who assume a power to penetrate the closet, ay, even the heart, and lay bare its secrets. Is it any wonder if we should become in time a nation of mere gossips? As for my passengers, even Neb got to consider them as so many nuisances.

From some cause or other, whether it was having these loose-tongued people on board or not, is more than I can say, but certain it is, about the time Salem was handsomely cleaned out, and a heavy inroad had been made upon [redacted] the weather changed. It be[redacted] gusts, sometimes from one point of [redacted] compass, sometimes from another, until the ship was brought to very short canvas, from a dread of being caught unprepared. At length these fantasies of the winds terminated in a tremendous gale, such as I had seldom then witnessed, and such, indeed, as I have seldom witnessed since. It is a great mistake to suppose that the heaviest weather occurs in the autumnal, spring, or winter months. Much the strongest blows I have ever known have taken place in the middle of the warm weather. This is the season of the hurricanes, and, out of the tropics, I think it is also the season of *the* gales. It is true, these gales do not return annually, a long succession of years frequently occurring without one; but when they do come, they may be expected in our own seas, in July, August or September.

The wind commenced at southwest on this occasion, and it blew fresh for several hours, sending us ahead on our course at the rate of eleven knots. As the sea got up and sail was reduced, our speed was a little diminished, perhaps, but we must have made more than a hundred miles in the first ten hours. The day was bright, cloudless, genial, and even bland, there being nothing unpleasant in the feeling of the swift currents of air that whirled past us. At sunset I did not quite like the appearance of the horizon; and we let the ship wade through it under her three topsails, single reefed, her fore-course, and fore-topmast stay-sail. This was short canvas for a vessel that had the wind nearly over her taffrail. At nine o'clock second reefs were taken in, and at ten the mizzen-topsail was furled. I then turned in, deeming the ship quite snug, leaving orders with the mates to reduce the sail did they find the ship straining or the spars in danger, and to call me should anything serious occur. I was not called until daylight, when Talcott laid his hand on my shoulder and said, "You had better turn out, Captain Wallingford, we have a peeler, and I want a little advice."

[redacted]ler, indeed, when I reached [redacted]. The ship was under a fore-course and a close-reefed main-topsail, canvas that can be carried a long time while running off, but which I at once saw was quite too much for us. An order was given immediately to take in the topsail. Notwithstanding the diminutive surface that was exposed, the surges given by this bit of canvas, as soon as the clews were eased off sufficiently to allow the cloth to jerk, shook the vessel's hull. It was a miracle that we saved the mast, or that we got the cloth rolled up at all. At one time I thought it would be necessary to cut it from the yard. Fortunately the gale was steady, this day proving bright and clear like that which had preceded it.

The men aloft made several attempts to hail the deck, but the wind blew too heavily to suffer them to be heard. Talcott had gone on the yard himself, and I saw him gesticulating in a way to indicate there was something ahead. The seas were running so high that it was not easy to obtain much of a look at the horizon, but by getting into the mizzen-rigging I had a glimpse of a vessel's spars, to the eastward of us and directly on our course. It was a ship under bare poles, running as nearly before us as she could, but making most fearful yaws; sometimes sheering away off to starboard in a way to threaten her with broaching-to; then taking a yaw to port, in which I could see all three of her masts, with her yards pointing nearly at us. I got but one glimpse of her hull as it rose on a sea at the same instant with the *Dawn*, and it actually appeared as if about to be blown away; though I took the stranger to be a vessel at least as large as we were ourselves. We were evidently approaching her fast, though both vessels were going the same way.

The *Dawn* steered beautifully, one of the greatest virtues in a ship, under the circumstances in which we were then placed. A single man was all that we had at the wheel, and he controlled it with ease. I could see it was very different with the ship ahead, and fancied they had made a mistake on board her, by taking in all their canvas. Talcott, and the gang aloft, had not got out of the top, however, before we had a hint that it would be well to imitate the stranger's prudence. Though our vessel steered so much better than another, no ship can keep on a direct line while running before the wind in a heavy sea. The waves occasionally fly past a vessel, like the scud glancing through the air; then they seem to pause altogether, as if to permit the ship to overtake them. When a vessel is lifted aft by one of these torrents of rushing waters, the helm loses a portion of its power; and the part of the vast machine that receives the impulse, seems intent on exchanging places with the bows, vessels often driving sideways before the surge, for spaces of time that are exceedingly embarrassing to the mariner. This happens to the best-steering ships, and is always one source of danger in very heavy weather, to those who are running off. The merit of the *Dawn* was in coming under command again, quickly, and in not losing so much of the influence of her helm, as is frequently the case with wild-steering craft. I understand there is a sloop-of-war now in the navy, that is difficult to get through a narrow passage, in a blow, in consequence of her having this propensity to turn her head first one way, then another, like a gay horse that breaks his bridle.

The hint given, just as Talcott was quitting the top, and to which there has been allusion, was given under the impulsion of one of these driving seas. The *Dawn* still carried her fore-topmast staysail, a small triangular piece of stout canvas, and which was particularly useful, as leading from the end of the bowsprit toward the head of the fore-topmast, in preventing her from broaching to, or passing up with her bows so near the wind as to produce the danger of seas breaking over the mass of the hull, and sweeping the decks. The landsman will understand this is the gravest of the dangers that occur at sea, in very heavy weather. When the ship is thrown broadside to the sea, or comes up so as to bring the wind abeam, or even forward of

the beam, as in lying-to, there is always risk from this source. Another danger, which is called pooping, is of a character, that one who is ignorant of the might of the ocean when aroused, would not be apt to foresee. It proceeds from the impetuous velocity of the waves, which, rushing ahead so much faster than the vessel that is even driving before the gale, breaks against the quarter, or stern, and throws its masses of water along the deck, in a line with its keel. I suppose the *President* steamer to have been lost by the first of these two dangers, as will appear in the following little theory.

There is no doubt that well-constructed steamers are safer craft, the danger from fire excepted, than the ordinary ship, except in very heavy weather. With an ordinary gale, they can contend with sufficient power; but it is an unfortunate consequence of their construction, that exactly as the danger increases their power of meeting it diminishes. In a very heavy swell, one cannot venture to resort to a strong head of steam, since one wheel may be nearly out of water, while the other is submerged, and thus endanger the machinery. Now the great length of these vessels renders it difficult to keep them up to the wind, or head to sea, the safest of all positions for a vessel in heavy weather, while it exposes them to the additional risk of having the water break aboard them near the waist, in running dead before it. In a word, I suppose a steamer difficult to be kept out of the trough, in very heavy weather; and no vessel can be safe *in* the trough of the seas, under such circumstances; one of great length less so than others. This is true, however, only in reference to those which carry the old-fashioned wheel; Ericsson's screw and Hunter's submerged wheels rendering steamships, in my poor judgment, the safest craft in the world.

The *Dawn* was overtaken by the seas, from time to time; and, then, like everything else that floats, she yawed, or rather, had her stern urged impetuously round, as if it were in a hurry to get ahead of the bows. On these occasions the noise made by the fore-topmast staysail, as it collapsed and filled, resembled the report of a small gun. We had similar reports from the foresail, which, for moments at a time, was actually becalmed, as the ship settled into the trough, and then became distended with a noise like that of the shaking of a thousand carpets, all filled with Sancho Panzas, at the same instant. As yet, the cloth and gear had stood these violent shocks admirably; but, just as Talcott was leading his party down, the ship made one of her sidelong movements; the staysail filled with a tremendous report, and away it flew to leeward, taken out of the bolt-rope as if it had been cut by shears, and then used by the furies of the tempest. Talcott smiled, as he gazed at the driving canvas, which went a quarter of a mile before it struck the water, whirling like a kite that had broken its string, and then he shook his head. I disliked, too, the tremendous surges of the foresail, when it occasionally collapsed, and as suddenly filled, menacing to start every bolt, and to part every rope connected with block or spar.

"We must get in that fore-course, Mr. Talcott," I said, "or we shall lose something. I see the ship ahead is under bare poles, and it were better we were as snug. If I did not dislike losing such a wind, it would be wiser to heave-to the ship; man the buntlines and clew-garnets, at once, and wait for a favorable moment."

We had held on to our canvas too long; the fault of youth. As I had determined to shorten sail, however, we now set about it in earnest, and with all the precautions exacted by the circumstances. Everybody that could be mustered was placed at the clew-lines and buntlines, with strict orders to do his best at the proper moments. The first mate went to the tack, and the second to the sheet. I was to take in the sail myself. I waited for a collapse; and then, while the ship was buried between two mounds of water, when it was impossible to see a hundred yards from her in any direction, and the canvas was actually dropping against the mast, I gave the usual orders. Every man hauled, as if for life, and we had got the clews pretty well up, when the vessel

came out of the cavern into the tempest, receiving the whole power of the gale, with a sudden surge, into the bellying canvas. Away went everything as if the gear were cobwebs. At the next instant the sail was in ribbons. I was deeply mortified, as well as rendered uneasy, by this accident, as the ship ahead unquestionably was in full view of all that happened.

It was soon apparent, however, that professional pride must give place to concern for the safety of the vessel. The wind had been steadily increasing in power, and had now reached a pass when it became necessary to look things steadily in the face. The strips of canvas that remained attached to the yard, with the blocks and gear attached, threshed about in a way to threaten the lives of all that approached. This was only at the intervals when the ship settled into the troughs; for, while under the full influence of the gale, pennants never streamed more directly from a mast than did these heavy fragments from the fore-yard. It was necessary to get rid of them; and Talcott had just volunteered to go on the yard with this end, when Neb sprung into the rigging without an order, and was soon beyond the reach of the voice. This daring black had several narrow escapes, more especially from the fore-sheet blocks; but he succeeded in cutting everything adrift, and in leaving nothing attached to the spar but the bolt-rope of the head of the sail. It is true, little effected this object, when the knife could be applied, the threads of the stout canvas snapping at the touch.

As soon as the ship was under bare poles, though at the sacrifice of two of her sails, I had leisure to look out for the other vessel. There she was, more than half a mile ahead of us, yawing wildly, and rolling her lower yardarm to the water's edge. As we drew nearer, I got better glimpses of this vessel, which was a ship, and as I fancied, an English West Indiaman, deep-loaded with the produce of the islands. Deep-loaded, as I fancied, for it was only at instants that she could be seen at all under circumstances to judge of this fact; sometimes her hull appearing to be nearly smothered in the brine, and then, again, her copper glistening in the sun, resembling a light vessel kept under the care of some thrifty housewife.

The *Dawn* did not fly, now all her canvas was gone, as fast as she had previously done. She went through the water at a greater rate than the vessel ahead; but it required an hour longer to bring the two ships within a cable's length of each other. Then, indeed, we got a near view of the manner in which the elements can play with such a mass of wood and iron as a ship, when in an angry mood. There were instants when I fancied I could nearly see the keel of the stranger for half its length, as he went foaming up on the crest of a wave, apparently ready to quit the water altogether; then, again, he would settle away into the blue abyss, hiding everything beneath his tops. When both vessels sunk together, no sign of our neighbor was visible, though so near. We came up after one of those deep plunges into the valleys of the ocean, and, to our alarm, saw the English ship yawing directly athwart our course, and within fifty fathoms of us. This was about the distance at which I intended to pass, little dreaming of finding the other ship so completely in our way. The Englishman must have intended to come a little nearer, and got one of those desperate sheers that so often ran away with him. There he was, however; and a breathless minute followed when he was first seen. Two vehicles dashing along a highway, with frightened and runaway teams, would not present a sight one-half as terrific as that which lay directly before our eyes.

The *Dawn* was plunging onward with a momentum to dash in splinters, did she strike any resisting object, and yawing herself sufficiently to render the passage hazardous. But the stranger made the matter tenfold worse. When I first saw him in this fearful proximity, his broadside was nearly offered to the seas, and away he was flying, on the summit of a mountain of foam, fairly crossing our

forefoot. At the next moment, he fell off before the wind again, and I could just see his tops directly ahead. His sheer had been to port, our intention having been to pass him on his larboard side; but, perceiving him to steer so wild, I thought it might be well to go in the other direction. Quick as the words could be uttered, therefore, I called out to port our helm. This was done, of course; and just as the *Dawn* felt the new influence, the other vessel took the same sheer, and away we both went to starboard at precisely the same instant. I shouted to right our helm to "hard a-starboard," and it was well I did; a minute more would have brought us down headlong on the Englishman. Even now we could only see his hull at instants; but the awful proximity of his spars denoted the full extent of the danger. Luckily we hit on opposite directions, or our common destruction would have been certain.

But it was one thing in that caldron of a sea to determine on a course, and another to follow it. As we rose on the last wave that alone separated us from the stranger, he was nearly ahead; and as we glanced onward, I saw that we could barely clear his larboard quarter. Our helm being already a-starboard, no more could be done. Should he take another sheer to-port, we must infallibly cut him in twain. As I have said, he had jammed his helm to-port, and slowly, and with a species of reluctance, he inclined a little aside. Then we came up, both ships rolling off, or our yards must have interlocked, and passing his quarter with our bows, we each felt the sheer at the same instant, and away we went asunder, the sterns of the ships looking at each other, and certainly not a hundred feet apart. A shout from Talcott drew me to our taffrail, and, standing on that of our neighbor, what or whom should I see waving his hat, but the red countenance of honest Moses Marble!

CHAPTER XXVI.

"At the piping of all hands,
When the judgment signal's spread—
When the islands and the lands,
And the seas give up the dead,
And the south and the north shall come;
When the sinner is dismay'd,
And the just man is afraid,
Then Heaven be thy aid,
Poor *Tom*." —BRAINARD.

THE two ships, in the haste of their respective crews to get clear of each other, were now running in the troughs; and the same idea would seem to have suggested itself to me and the other master, at the same instant. Instead of endeavoring to keep away again, one kept his helm hard a-port, and the other as hard a-starboard, until we both came by the wind, though on opposite tacks. The Englishman set his mizzen-staysail, and though he made bad weather of it, he evidently ran much less risk than in scudding. The seas came on board him constantly; but not in a way to do any material damage. As for the *Dawn*, she lay-to, like a duck, under bare poles. I had a spare staysail stopped up in her mizzen-rigging, from the top down, and after that the ship was both easy and dry. Once in a while, it is true, her bows would meet some fellow heavier than common, and then we got a few hogsheads of water forward; but it went out to leeward as fast as it came in to windward. At the turn of the day, however, the gale broke, and the weather moderated sensibly; both sea and wind beginning to go down.

Had we been alone, I should not have hesitated about bearing up, getting some sail on the ship, and running off on my course, again; but the desire to speak the stranger, and have some communication with Marble, was so strong, that I could not make up my mind to do so. Including myself, Talcott, Neb, the cabin steward, and six of the people forward, there were ten of us on board who knew the ex-mate; and, of the whole ten, there was not a dissenting voice concerning his identity. I determined, therefore, to stick by the Englishman, and at least have some communication with my old friend. As for myself, I own I loved Marble, un-

couth and peculiar as he sometimes was. I owed him more than any other man living, Mr. Hardinge excepted; for he had made me a seaman, having been of use to me professionally in a hundred ways. Then we had seen so much in company, that I regarded him as a portion of my experience, and as, in some measure, identified with my own nautical career.

I was afraid at one moment that the Englishman intended to remain as he was all night; but, about an hour before sunset, I had the gratification to see him set his foresail and keep off. I had wore round, two hours before, to get the *Dawn's* head on the same tack with him, and followed under bare poles. As the stranger soon set his main-topsail, close reefed, and then his fore, it enabled us to make a little sail also, in order to keep up with him. This we did all that night; and, in the morning, both ships were under everything that would draw, with a moderate breeze from the northward, and no great matter of sea going. The English vessel was about a league to leeward of us, and a little ahead. Under such circumstances, it was easy to close. Accordingly, just as the two ships' companies were about to go to breakfast, the *Dawn* ranged up under the lee-quarter of the stranger.

"What ship's that?" I hailed in the usual manner.

"The *Dundee;* Robert Ferguson, master. What ship's that?"

"The *Dawn;* Miles Wallingford. Where are you from?"

"From Rio Janeiro, bound to London. Where are *you* from?"

"From New Yerk to Bordeaux. A heavy blow we have just had of it."

"Quite; the like of it I've not seen in many a day. You've a pretty seaboat, yon!"

"She made capital weather, in the late gale, and I've every reason to be satisfied with her. Pray, haven't you an American on board, of the name of Marble? We fancied that we saw the face of an old shipmate on your taffrail, yesterday, and have kept you company in order to inquire after his news."

"Ay, ay," answered the Scotch master, waving his hand, "the chiel will be visiting you prasently. He's below, stowing away his dunnage; and will be thanking you for a passage home, I'm thinking."

As these words were uttered, Marble appeared on deck, and waved his hat, again, in recognition. This was enough; as we understood each other, the two ships took sufficient room, and hove-to. We lowered our boat, and Talcott went alongside of the *Dundee,* in quest of our old shipmate. Newspapers and news were exchanged; and in twenty minutes I had the extreme gratification of grasping Marble once more by the hand.

My old friend was too much affected to speak for some little time. He shook hands with everybody, and seemed as much astonished as he was delighted at finding so many of us together again; but not a syllable did he utter for several minutes. I had his chest passed into the cabin, and then went and took my seat alongside of him on the hen-coops, intending to hear his story, as soon as he was disposed to give it. But it was no easy matter to get out of ear-shot of my passengers. During the gale, they had been tongue-tied, and I had a little peace; but, no sooner did the wind and sea go down, than they broke out in the old spot, and began to do Boston, in the way they had commenced. Now Marble had come on board in a manner so unusual, and it was evident a secret history was to be revealed, they all three took post in the companion-way, in a manner to render it impossible anything material could escape them. I knew the folly of attempting a change of position on deck; we should certainly be followed up; and, people of this class, so long as they can make the excuse of saying they heard any part of a secret, never scruple about inventing the portions that happen to escape their ears. Consequently, I desired Marble and Talcott to follow me; and, incontinently, I led the way into the main-top. I was obeyed, the second mate having the watch, and all three of us were soon seated with our legs over the top-rim, as

comfortable as so many gossips, who had just finished their last cups, have stirred the fire, and drawn their heads together to open a fresh budget. Neither Sarah nor Jane could follow us, thank God!

"There, d—n 'em," said I, a little pointedly, for it was enough to make a much more scrupulous person swear, "we've got the length of the main-rigging between us, and I do not think they will venture into the top, this fine morning, in order to overhear what shall be said. It would puzzle even Wallace Mortimer to do that, Talcott."

"If they do," observed Talcott, laughing, "we can retreat to the cross-trees, and thence to the royal-yard."

Marble looked inquisitive, but, at the same time, he looked knowing.

"I understand," he said, with a nod; "three people with six sets of ears—is it not so, Miles?"

"Precisely; though you only do them credit by halves, for you should have added to this inventory forty tongues."

"Well, that is a large supply. The man, or woman, who is so well provided, should carry plenty of ballast. However, as you say, they're out of hail now, and must guess at all they repeat, if repeating it can be called."

"Quite as much as nine-tenths of what they give as coming from others," observed Talcott. "People never can tell so much of other person's affairs, without bailing out most of their ideas from their own scuttle-butts."

"Well, let them go to—Bordeaux," said I, "since they are bound there. And now, my dear Marble, here we are, and dying to know all that has happened to you. You have firm friends in Talcott and myself; either of us ready to give you his berth for the asking."

"Thank 'ee, my dear boys—thank 'ee, with all my heart and soul," returned the honest fellow, dashing the moisture from his eyes, with the back of his hand. "I believe you would, boys; I do believe you would, one or both. I am glad, Miles, you came up into this bloody top, for I wouldn't like to let your reg'lar 'longshore harpies see a man of my time of life, and one that has been to sea, now, man and boy, close on to forty years, with as much blubber about him as one of your right whales. Well—and now for the log; for I suppose you'll insist on overhauling it, lads."

"That we shall, and see you miss no leaf of it. Be as particular as if it were overhauled in an insurance case."

"Ay; they're bloody knaves, sometimes, them underwriters, and a fellow need be careful to get his dues out of them—that is to say *some*; others ag'in are gentlemen down to their shoe-buckles, and no sooner see a poor shipwrecked devil, than they open their tills, and begin to count out before he has opened his mouth."

"Well, but your own adventures, my old friend; you forget we are dying with curiosity."

"Ay; your cur'osity's a troublesome inmate, and will never be quiet as long as one tries to keep it under hatches; especially female cur'osity. Well, I must gratify you, and so I'll make no more bones about it, though it's giving an account of my own obstinacy and folly. I reckon, now, my boys, you missed me the day the ship sailed from the island?"

"That we did, and supposed you had got tired of your experiment before it began," I answered, "so were off, before we were ourselves."

"You had reason for so thinking, though you were out in your reckoning too. No—it happened in this fashion. After you left me I began to generalize over my situation, and I says to myself, says I, 'Moses Marble, them lads will never consent to sail and leave you here, on this island, alone, like a bloody hermit,' says I. 'If you want to hold on,' says I, 'and try your hand at a hermitage,' says I, 'or to play "Robinson Crusoe,"' says I, 'you must be out of the way when the *Crisis* sails'—boys, what's become of the old ship? Not a word have I heard about her, yet!"

"She was loading for London when we sailed, her owners intending to send her the same voyage over again."

"And they refused to let you have her,

Miles, on account of your youth, notwithstanding all you did for them?"

"Not so; they pressed me to keep her, but I preferred a ship of my own. The *Dawn* is my property, Master Moses."

"Thank God! Then there is one honest chap among the owners. And how did she behave? Had you any trouble with the pirates?"

Perceiving the utter uselessness of attempting to hear his own story before I rendered an account of the *Crisis* and her exploits, I gave Marble a history of her voyage from the time we parted down to the day we reached New York.

"And that scaramouch of a schooner that the Frenchman gave us in his charity?"

"The *Pretty Poll?* She got home safe, was sold, and is now in the West India trade. There is a handsome balance, amounting to some fourteen hundred dollars, in the owners' hands, coming to you from prize money and wages."

It is not in nature for any man to be sorry he has money. I saw by Marble's eyes that this sum, so unusually large for him to possess, formed a new tie to the world, and that he fancied himself a much happier man in possessing it. He looked at me earnestly for quite a minute, and then remarked, I make no doubt with sincere regret—

"Miles, if I had a mother living now, that money might make her old age comfortable! It seems that they who have no mothers have money, and they who have no money have mothers."

I waited a moment for Marble to recover his self-command, and then urged him to continue his story.

"I was telling you how I generalized over my situation," resumed the ex-mate, "as soon as I found myself alone in the hut. I came to the conclusion that I should be carried off by force, if I remained till next day; and so I got into the launch, carried her out of the lagoon, taking care to give the ship a berth, went through the reef, and kept turning to windward until daybreak. By that time the island was quite out of sight, though I saw the upper sails of the ship as soon as you got her under way. I kept the topgallant-sails in sight, until I made the island again; and as you went off I ran in and took possession of my dominions, with no one to dispute my will, or to try to reason me out of my consait."

"I am glad to hear you term that notion conceit, for, certainly, it was not reason. You soon discovered your mistake, my old messmate, and began to think of home."

"I soon discovered, Miles, that if I had neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, that I had a country and friends. The bit of marble on which I was found in the stonecutter's yard then seemed as dear to me as a gold cradle is to a king's son; and I thought of you, and all the rest of you—nay, I yearned after you as a mother would yearn for her children."

"Poor fellow, you were solitary enough, I dare say; had you no amusement with your pigs and poultry?"

"For a day or two they kept me pretty busy. But by the end of a week I discovered that pigs and poultry were not made to keep company with man. I had consaited that I could pass the rest of my days in the bosom of my own family, like any other man who had made his fortune and retired, but I found my household too small for such a life as that. My great mistake was in supposing that the Marble family could be happy in its own circle."

This was said bitterly, though it was said drolly, and while it made Talcott and myself laugh, it also made us sorry.

"I fell into another mistake, however, boys," Marble continued, "and it might as well be owned. I took it into my head that I should be all alone on the island, but I found, to my cost, that the devil insisted on having his share. I'll tell you how it is, Miles, a man must either look ahead or look astarn; there is no such thing as satisfying himself with the present moorings. Now this was my misfortune, for ahead I had nothing to look forward to, and astarn what comfort had I in overhauling past sins?"

"I think I can understand your difficulties, my friend; how did you manage to get rid of them?"

"I left the island. You had put the Frenchman's launch in capital condition, and all I had to do was to fill up the breakers with fresh water, kill a hog and salt him away, put on board a quantity of biscuit, and be off. As for eatables, you know there was no scarcity on the island, and I took my choice. I make no doubt there are twenty hogsheads of undamaged sugars at this very moment in the hold of that wreck and on the beach of the island. I fed my poultry on it the whole time I stayed."

"And so you abandoned Marble Land to the pigs and the fowls?"

"I did, indeed, Miles, and I hope the poor creatures will have a comfortable time of it. I gave 'em what the lawyers call a quitclaim, and sailed two months to a day after you went off in the *Crisis*."

"I should think, old shipmate, that your voyage must have been as solitary and desperate as your life ashore."

"I am amazed to hear you say that. I'm never solitary at sea, one has so much to do in taking care of his craft, and then he can always look forward to the day he'll get in. But this generalizing, night and day, without any port ahead, and little comfort in looking astarn, will soon fit a man for Bedlam. I just weathered Cape Crazy, I can tell you, lads, and that too in the white water! As for my v'y'ge being desperate, what was there to make it so, I should like to know?"

"You must have been twelve or fifteen hundred miles from any island where you could look forward to anything like safety, and that is a distance one would rather not travel all alone on the high seas."

"Pshaw! all consait. You're getting notional, Miles, now you're a master and owner. What's a run of a thousand or fifteen hundred miles, in a tight boat, and with plenty of grub and water? It was the easiest matter in the world, and if it warn't for that bloody Cape Horn, I should have made as straight a wake for Coenties' Slip as the trending of the land would have allowed. As it was, I turned to windward, for I knew the savages to leeward weren't to be trusted. You see it was as easy as working out a day's work. I kept the boat on a wind all day, and long bits of the night, too, until I wanted sleep, and then I hove her to under a reefed mainsail, and slept as sound as a lord. I hadn't an uncomfortable moment after I got outside of the reef again, and the happiest hour of my life was that in which I saw the tree tops of the island dip."

"And how long were you navigating in this manner, and what land did you first make?"

"Seven weeks, though I made half a dozen islands, every one of them just such a looking object as that I had left. You weren't about to catch me ashore again in any of them miserable places! I gave the old boat a slap, and promised to stick by her as long as she would stick by me, and I kept my word, I saw savages, moreover, on one or two of the islands, and gave them a berth, having no fancy for being barbecued."

"And where did you finally make your landfall?"

"Nowhere, so far as the launch was concerned. I fell in with a Manilla ship, bound to Valparaiso, and got on board her; and sorry enough was I for the change, when I came to find out how they lived. The captain took me in, however, and I worked my passage into port. Finding no ship likely to sail soon, I entered with a native who was about to cross the Andes, bound over on this side, for the east coast. Don't you remember, Miles, monsters of mountains that we could see, a bit inland, and covered with snow, all along the west side of South America? You must remember the chaps I mean."

"Certainly—they are much too plain, and objects much too striking, ever to be forgotten, when once seen."

"Well, them's the Andes; and rough customers they be, let me tell you, boys. You know there is little amusement in a sailor's walking on the levelest 'arth and handsomest highways, on account of the bloody ups and downs a fellow meets

with; and so you may get some idee of the time we had of it, when I tell you, had all the seas we saw in the last blow been piled on top of each other, they would have made but a large pancake, compared to them 'ere Andes. Natur' must have outdone herself in making 'em; and when they were thrown together, what good comes of it all? Such mountains might be of some use in keeping the French and English apart; but you leave nothing but bloody Spaniards on one side of them Andes, and find bloody Spaniards and Portuguese on the other. However, we found our way over them, and brought up at a place called Buenos Ayres, from which I worked my passage round to Rio in a coaster. At Rio, you know, I felt quite at home, having stopped in there often, in going backward and forward."

"And thence you took passage in the *Dundee* for London, intending to get a passage home by the first opportunity?"

"It needs no witch to tell that. I had to scull about Rio for several months doing odd jobs as a rigger, and the like of that, until, finding no Yankee came in, I got a passage in a Scotchman. I'll not complain of Sawney, who was kind enough to me as a shipwrecked mariner; for that was the character I sailed under, hermits being no way fashionable among us Protestants, though it is very different among them Catholic chaps, I can tell you. I happened to mention to a landlady on the road, that I was a sort of hermit on his travels; when I thought the poor woman would have gone down on her knees and worshiped me."

Here then was the history of Moses Marble, and the end of the colony of Marble Land, pigs and poultry excepted. It was now my turn to be examined. I had to answer fifty curious inquiries, some of which I found sufficiently embarrassing. When, in answer to his interrogatories, Marble learned that the major and Miss Merton had actually been left at Clawbonny, I saw the ex-mate wink at Talcott, who smiled in reply. Then, where was Rupert, and how came on the law? The farm and mills were not forgotten; and as for Neb, he was actually ordered up into the top, in order that there might be another shake of the hand, and that he might answer for himself. In a word, nothing could be more apparent than the delight of Marble at finding himself among us once more. I believed even then, that the man loved me; and the reader will remember how long we had sailed together, and how much we had seen in company. More than once did my old shipmate dash the tears from his eyes as he spoke of his satisfaction.

"I say, Miles—I say, Roger," he cried —"this is like being at home, and none of your bloody hermitages! Blast me if I think, now, I should dare pass through a wood all alone. I'm never satisfied unless I see a fellow-creatur', for fear of being left. I did pretty well with the Scotchman, who *has* a heart, though it's stowed away in oatmeal, but *this* is *home*. I must ship as your steward, Miles, for hang on to you I will."

"If we ever part, again, until one or both go into dock, it will be your fault, my old friend. If I have thought of you once, since we parted, I have dreamed of you fifty times! Talcott and I were talking of you in the late gale, and wondering what sail you would advise us to put the ship under."

"The old lessons have not all been forgotten, boys; it was easy enough to see that. I said to myself, as you stood down upon us, 'that chap has a real sea-dog aboard, as is plain by the manner in which he has everything snug, while he walks ahead like an owner in a hurry to be first in the market.'"

It was then agreed Marble should keep a watch, whenever it suited him, and that he should do just as he pleased aboard. At some future day, some other arrangement might be made, though he declared his intention to stick by the ship, and also announced a determination to be my first mate for life, as soon as Talcott got a vessel, as doubless he would, through the influence of his friends, as soon as he returned home. I laughed at all this, though I bade him heartily welcome, and then I nicknamed him commodore, adding that he should sail with me in that

capacity, doing just as much and just as little duty as he pleased. As for money, there was a bag of dollars in the cabin, and he had only to put his hand in, and take what he wanted. The key of the locker was in my pocket, and could be had for asking. Nobody was more delighted with this arrangement than Neb, who had even taken a fancy to Marble from the moment when the latter led him from the steerage of the *John*, by the ear.

"I say, Miles, what sort of bloody animals are them passengers of yours?" Marble next demanded, looking over the rim of the top, down at the trio on deck, with a good deal of curiosity expressed in his countenance. "This is the first time I ever knew a ship-master driven aloft by his passengers, in order to talk secrets!"

"That is because you never sailed with the Brigham family. They'll pump you till you suck, in the first twenty-four hours, rely on it. They'll get every fact about your birth, the island where you first saw me, what you have been about, and what you mean to do; in a word, the past, present, and future."

"Leave me to overlay their cur'osity," answered the ex-mate, or new commodore —"I got my hand in by boarding six weeks with a Connecticut old maid, once, and I'll defy the keenest questioner of them all."

We had a little more discourse, when we all went below, and I introduced Marble to my passengers as one who was to join our mess. After this, things went on in their usual train. In the course of the day, however, I overheard the following brief dialogue between Brigham and Marble, the ladies being much too delicate to question so rough a mariner.

"You came on board of us somewhat unexpectedly, I rather conclude, Captain Marble?" commenced the gentleman.

"Not in the least; I have been expecting to meet the *Dawn*, just about this spot, more than a month, now."

"Well, that is odd! I do not comprehend how such a thing could well be foreseen?"

"Do you understand spherical trigonometry, sir?"

"I cannot say I am at all expert—I've looked into mathematics, but have no great turn for the study."

"It would be hopeless, then, to attempt to explain the matter. If you had your hand in at the spherical, I could make it all as plain as the capstan."

"You and Captain Wallingford must be somewhat old acquaintances, I conclude?"

"Somewhat," answered Marble, very dryly.

"Have you ever been at the place that he calls Clawbonny? A queer name, I rather think, captain!"

"Not at all, sir. I know a place down in the Eastern States that was called Scratch and Claw, and a very pretty spot it was."

"It's not usual for us to the eastward to give names to farms and places. It is done a little by the Boston folks, but they are notional, as everybody knows."

"Exactly; I suppose it was for want of use the chap I mean made out no better in naming his place."

Mr. Brigham was no fool; he was merely a gossip. He took the hint, and asked no more questions of Marble. He tried Neb, notwithstanding; but the black having his orders, obeyed them so literally, that I really believe we parted in Bordeaux, a fortnight later, without any of the family's making the least discovery. Glad enough was I to get rid of them; yet, brief as had been our intercourse, they produced a sensible influence on my future happiness. Such is the evil of this habit of loose talking, men giving credit to words conceived in ignorance and uttered in the indulgence of one of the most contemptible of all our propensities. To return to my ship.

We reached Bordeaux without any further accident or delay. I discharged in the usual way, and began to look about me, for another freight. It had been my intention to return to New York, and to keep the festivities of attaining my majority, at Clawbonny; but, I confess, the discourse of these eternal gossips, the Brighams, had greatly lessened the desire to see home again, so soon. A freight for

New York was offered me, but I postponed an answer, until it was given to another ship. At length an offer was made to me to go to Cronstadt, in Russia, with a cargo of wines and brandies, and I accepted it. The great and better informed merchants, as it would seem, distrusted the continuance of the hollow peace that then existed, and a company of them thought it might be well to transfer their liquors to the capital of the czar, in readiness for contingencies. An American ship was preferred, on account of her greater speed, as well as on account of her probable neutral character, in the event of troubles occurring at any unlooked-for moment.

The *Dawn* took in her wines and brandies accordingly, and sailed for the Baltic about the last of August. She had a long, but safe passage, delivering the freight according to the charter-party, in good condition. While at Cronstadt, the American consul, and the consignees of an American ship that had lost her master and chief mate by the small-pox, applied to me to let Marble carry the vessel home. I pressed the offer on my old friend, but he obstinately refused to have anything to do with the vessel. I then recommended Talcott, and after some negotiation, the latter took charge of the *Hyperion*. I was sorry to part with my mate, to whom I had become strongly attached; but the preferment was so clearly to his advantage, that I could take no other course. The vessel being ready, she sailed the day after Talcott joined her; and, sorry am I to be compelled to add, that she was never heard of, after clearing the Cattegat. The equinox of that season was tremendously severe, and it caused the loss of many vessels; that of the *Hyperion* doubtless among the rest.

Marble insisted on taking Talcott's place, and he now became my chief mate, as I had once been his. After a little delay, I took in freight on Russian government account, and sailed for Odessa. It was thought the Sublime Porte would let an American through; but, after reaching the Dardanelles, I was ordered back, and was obliged to leave my cargo in Malta, which it was expected would be in possession of its own knights by that time, agreeably to the terms of the late treaty. From Malta I sailed for Leghorn, in quest of another freight. I pass over the details of these voyages, as really nothing worthy of being recorded occurred. They consumed a good deal of time; the delay at the Dardanelles alone exceeding six weeks, during which negotiations were going on up at Constantinople, but all in vain. In consequence of all these detentions, and the length of the passages, I did not reach Leghorn until near the close of March. I wrote to Grace and Mr. Hardinge, whenever a favorable occasion offered, but I did not get a letter from home, during the whole period. It was not in the power of my sister or guardian—*late* guardian would be the most accurate expression, as I had been of age since the previous October—to write, it being impossible for me to let them know when, or where, a letter would find me. It followed that while my friends at home were kept tolerably apprised of my movements, I was absolutely in the dark as respected them. That this ignorance gave me great concern it would be idle to deny; yet, I had a species of desperate satisfaction in keeping aloof, and in leaving the course clear to Mr. Andrew Drewett. As respects substantials, I had sent a proper power of attorney to Mr. Hardinge, who, I doubted not, would take the same care of my temporal interests he had never ceased to do since the day of my beloved mother's death.

Freights were not offering freely at Leghorn, when the *Dawn* arrived. After waiting a fortnight, however, I began to take in for America, and on American account. In the meantime, the cargo coming to hand slowly, I left Marble to receive it, and proceeded on a little excursion in Tuscany, or Etruria, as that part of the world was then called. I visited Pisa, Lucca, Florence, and several other intermediate towns. At Florence I passed a week looking at sights, and amusing myself the best way I could. The gallery and the churches kept me pretty busy, and the reader will judge of my surprise

one day, at hearing my own name uttered on a pretty high key, by a female voice, in the Duomo, or Cathedral of the place. On turning I found myself in the presence of the Brighams! I was overwhelmed with questions in a minute. Where had I been? Where was Talcott? Where was the ship? When did I sail, and whither did I sail? After this came the communications. *They* had been to Paris; had seen the French Consul, and had dined with Mr. R. N. Livingston, then negotiating the treaty of Louisiana; had seen the Louvre; had been to Geneva, had seen the lake; had seen Mont Blanc; had crossed Mont Cenis; had been at Milan; Rome; had seen the Pope; Naples; had seen Vesuvius; had been at Pæstum; had come back to Florence, and *nous voici!*

Glad enough was I, when I got them fairly within the gates of the city of the Lily. Next came America; from which part of the world they received such delightful letters! One from Mrs. Jonathan Little, a Salem lady then residing in New York, had just reached them. It contained four sheets, and was full of *news*. Then commenced the details; and I was compelled to listen to a string of gossip that connected nearly all the people of mark my informants had ever heard of in the great *Commercial* Emporium that was to be. How suitable was this name! Emporium would not have been sufficiently distinctive for a town in which "the merchants" are all in all; in which they must have the post-office; in which they support the nation by paying all the revenue; in which the sun must shine and the dew fall to suit their wants; and in which the winds themselves may be recreant to their duty, when they happen to be foul! Like the Holy Catholic Protestant Episcopal Church, Trading Commercial Trafficking Emporium should have been the style of such a place; and I hope, ere long, some of the "Manor Born" genii of that great town will see the matter rectified.

"By the way, Captain Wallingford," cut in Jane, at one of Sarah's breathing intervals, that reminded me strongly of the colloquial Frenchman's "*s'il crache il est perdu,*" "you know something of poor Mrs. Bradfort, I believe?" I assented by a bow.

"It was just as we told you," cried Sarah, taking her revenge. "The poor woman is dead! and, no doubt, of that cancer. What a frightful disease! and how accurate has our information been in all that affair!"

"I think her will the most extraordinary of all," added Mr. Brigham, who, as a man, kept an eye more to the main chance. "I suppose you have heard all about her will, Captain Wallingford?"

I reminded the gentleman that this was the first I had ever heard of the lady's death.

"She has left every dollar to young Mr. Hardinge, her cousin's son," added Jane, "cutting off that handsome, genteel young lady, his sister, as well as her father, without a cent"—in 1803 they just began to speak of *cents*, instead of farthings—"and everybody says it was so cruel!"

"That is not the worst of it," put in Sarah. "They *do* say that Miss Merton, the English lady that made so much noise in New York—let me see, Mr. Brigham, what earl's granddaughter did we hear she was?"

This was a most injudicious question, as it gave the husband an opportunity to take the word out of her mouth.

"Lord Cumberland's, I believe, or some such person; but no matter whose. It is quite certain General Merton, her father, consents to let her marry Mr. Hardinge, now Mrs. Bradfort's will is known; and, as for the sister, he declares he will never give her a dollar."

"He will have sixteen thousand dollars a year," said Jane, with emphasis.

"Six, my dear, *six*," returned the brother, who had reasonably accurate notions touching dollars and cents, or he never would have been traveling in Italy; "six thousand dollars a year was just Mrs. Bradfort's income, as my old schoolfellow Upham told me, and there isn't another man in York who can tell fortunes

as true as himself. He makes a business of it, and don't fail one time in twenty."

"And is it quite certain that Mr. Rupert Hardinge gets all the fortune of Mrs. Bradfort?" I asked, with a strong effort to seem composed.

"Not the least doubt of it in the world. Everybody is talking about it; and there cannot well be a mistake, you know, as it was thought the sister would be an heiress, and people generally take care to be pretty certain about that class. But, of course, a young man of that fortune will be snapped up, as a swallow catches a fly. I've bet Sarah a pair of gloves we hear of his marriage in three months."

The Brighams talked an hour longer, and made me promise to visit them at their hotel, a place I could not succeed in finding. That evening I left Florence for Leghorn, writing a note of apology, in order not to be rude. Of course, I did not believe half these people had told me; but a part, I made no doubt, was true. Mrs. Bradfort was dead, out of all question; and I thought it possible she might not so far have learned to distinguish between the merit of Lucy, and that of Rupert, to leave her entire fortune to the last. As for the declaration of the brother that he would give his sister nothing, that seemed to me to be rather strong even for Rupert. I knew the dear girl too well, and was certain she would not repine; and I was burning with the desire to be in the field, now she was again penniless.

What a change was this! Here were the Hardinges, those whom I had known as poor almost as dependents on my own family, suddenly enriched. I knew Mrs. Bradfort had a large six thousand a year besides her own dwelling house, which stood in Wall Street, a part of the commercial emporium that was just beginning to be the focus of banking, and all other moneyed operations, and which even then promised to become a fortune of itself. It is true, that old Daniel M'Cormick still held his levees on his venerable stoop, where all the heavy men in town used to congregate, and joke, and buy and sell, and abuse Boney; and that the Winthrops, the Wilkeses, the Jaunceys, the Verplancks, the Whites, the Ludlows, and other families of mark, then had their town residences in this well-known street; but coming events were beginning "to cast their shadows before," and it was easy to foresee that this single dwelling might at least double Rupert's income, under the rapid increase of the country and the town. Though Lucy was still poor, Rupert was now rich.

If family connection, that all-important and magical influence, could make so broad a distinction between us, while I was comparatively wealthy and Lucy had nothing, what, to regard the worst side of the picture, might I not expect from it when the golden scale preponderated on her side? That Andrew Drewett would still marry her, I began to fear again. Well, why not? I had never mentioned love to the sweet girl, fondly, ardently as I was attached to her; and what reason had I for supposing that one in her situation could reserve her affections for a truant sailor? I am afraid I was unjust enough to regret that this piece of good fortune should have befallen Rupert. He must do something for his sister, and every dollar seemed to raise a new barrier between us.

From that hour I was all impatience to get home. Had not the freight been engaged, I think I should have sailed in ballast. By urging the merchants, however, we got to sea May 15th, with a full cargo, a portion of which I had purchased on my own account with the money earned by the ship within the last ten months. Nothing occurred worthy of notice until the *Dawn* neared the Straits of Gibraltar. Here we were boarded by an English frigate, and first learned the declaration of a new war between France and England; a contest that, in the end, involved in it all the rest of Christendom. Hostilities had already commenced, the First Consul having thrown aside the mask just three days after we left port. The frigate treated us well, it being too soon for the abuses that followed, and we got through the pass without further molestation.

As soon as in the Atlantic I took care

to avoid everything we saw, and nothing got near us until we had actually made the Highlands of Navesink. An English sloop-of-war, however, had stood into the angles of the coast formed by Long Island and the Jersey shore, giving us a race for the Hook. I did not know whether I ought to be afraid of this cruiser or not, but my mind was made up not to be boarded if it could be helped. We succeeded in passing ahead, and entered the Hook while he was still a mile outside of the bar. I got a pilot on the bar, as was then very usual, and stood up toward the town with studding-sails set, it being just a twelvemonth, almost to an hour, from the day when I passed up the bay in the *Crisis*. The pilot took the ship in near Coenties' Slip, Marble's favorite berth, and we had her secured and her sails unbent before the sun set.

CHAPTER XXVII.

With look like patient Job's, eschewing evil;
With motions graceful as a bird's in air;
Thou art, in sober truth, the veriest devil
That ere clinched fingers in a captive's hair."
—HALLECK.

THERE was about an hour of daylight, when I left the counting-house of the consignees, and pursued my way up Wall Street, to Broadway. I was on my way to the City Hotel, then, as now, one of the best inns of the town. On Trinity Church walk, just as I quitted the Wall Street crossing, whom should I come plump upon in turning, but Rupert Hardinge? He was walking down the street in some little haste, and was evidently much surprised, perhaps I might say startled, at seeing me. Nevertheless, Rupert was not easily disconcerted, and his manner at once became warm, if not entirely free from embarrassment. He was in deep mourning; though otherwise dressed in the height of the fashion.

"Wallingford!" he exclaimed—it was the first time he did not call me "Miles"—"Wallingford! my fine fellow, what cloud did you drop from? We have had so many reports concerning you, that your appearance is as much a matter of surprise as would be that of Bonaparte, himself. Of course your ship is in?"

"Of course," I answered, taking his offered hand; "you know I am wedded to *her*, for better, for worse, until death or shipwreck doth us part."

"Ay, so I've always told the ladies—'there is no other matrimony in Wallingford,' I've said often, 'than that which will make him a ship's husband.' But you look confoundedly well — the sea agrees with you famously."

"I make no complaint of my health—but tell me of that of our friends and families. Your father——"

"Is up at Clawbonny, just now—you know how it is with him. No change of circumstances will ever make him regard his little smoke-house-looking church as anything but a cathedral, and his parish as a diocese. Since the great change in our circumstances, all this is useless, and I often *think*—you know one wouldn't like to *say* as much to *him*—but I often *think*, he might just as well give up preaching, altogether."

"Well, this is good, so far—now for the rest of you, all. You meet my impatience too coldly."

"Yes, you *were* always an impatient fellow. Why, I suppose you need hardly be told that I have been admitted to the bar."

"That I can very well imagine—you must have found your sea-training of great service on the examination."

"Ay! my dear Wallingford—what a simpleton I was! But one is so apt to take up strange conceits in boyhood, that he is compelled to look back at them in wonder, in after life. But, which way are you walking?"—slipping an arm in mine—"if up, I'll take a short turn with you. There's scarce a soul in town, at this season; but you will see prodigiously fine girls in Broadway, at this hour, notwithstanding—those that belong to the other sets, you know; those that belong to families that can't get into the country among the leaves. Yes, as I was saying, one scarce knows himself, after twenty. Now I can hardly recall a taste, or an inclina-

tion, that I cherished in my teens, that has not flown to the winds. Nothing is permanent in boyhood—we grow in our persons, and our minds, sentiments, affections, views, hopes, wishes, and ambition all take new directions."

"This is not very flattering, Rupert, to one whose acquaintance with you may be said to be altogether boyish."

"Oh! of course I don't mean *that*. Habit keeps all right in such matters; and I dare say I shall always be as much attached to you as I was in childhood. Still, we are on diverging lines, now, and cannot forever remain boys."

"You have told me nothing of the rest," I said, half choked, in my eagerness to hear of the girls, and yet unaccountably afraid to ask. I believe I dreaded to hear that Lucy was married.

"How, and where is Grace?"

"Oh! Grace!—yes, I forgot her, to my shame, as you would naturally wish to inquire. Why, my dear *captain*, to be as frank as one ought to be with so old an acquaintance, your sister is not in a good way, I'm much afraid; though I've not seen her in an age. She was down among us in the autumn, but left town for the holidays, for them she insisted on keeping at Clawbonny, where she said the family had always kept them, and away she went. Since then, she has not returned; but I fear she is far from well. You know what a fragile creature Grace ever has been—*so* American! Ah! Wallingford, our females have no constitutions—charming as angels, delicate as fairies, and all that; but not to be compared to the English women in constitutions."

I felt a torrent of fire rushing through my blood, and it was with difficulty I refrained from hurling the heartless scoundrel who leaned on my arm, into the ditch. A moment of reflection, however, warned me of the precipice on which I stood. He was Mr. Hardinge's son, Lucy's brother; and I had no proofs that he had ever induced Grace to think he loved her. It was so easy for those who had been educated as we four had been, to be deceived on such a point, that I felt it unsafe to do anything precipitately. Friendship, *habit*, as Rupert expressed it, might so easily be mistaken for the fruits of passion, that one might well be deceived. Then it was all-important to Grace's self-respect, to her feelings, in some measure to her character, to be careful, that I suppressed my wrath, though it nearly choked me.

"I am sorry to hear this," I answered, after a long pause, the deep regret I felt at having such an account of my sister's health contributing to make my manner seem natural; "very, *very* sorry to hear it. Grace is one that requires the tenderest care and watching; and I have been making passage after passage in pursuit of money, when I am afraid I should have been at Clawbonny, discharging the duties of a brother. I can never forgive myself!"

"Money is a very good thing, captain," answered Rupert, with a smile that appeared to mean more than the tongue expressed—"a surprisingly good thing is money! But you must not exaggerate Grace's illness, which I dare say is merely constitutional, and will lead to nothing. I hope your many voyages have produced their fruits?"

"And Lucy," I resumed, disregarding his question concerning my own success as an owner, "where and how is she?"

"Miss Hardinge is in town—in her own—that is, in *our* house—in Wall Street, though she goes to *the place* in the morning. No one who can, likes to remain among these hot bricks, that has a pleasant country-house to fly to, and open to receive him. But I forgot—I have supposed you to know what it is very likely you have never heard?"

"I learned the death of Mrs. Bradfort while in Italy, and, seeing you in black, at once supposed it was for her."

"Yes, that's just it. An excellent woman has been taken from us, and, had she been my own mother, I could not have received greater kindnesses from her. Her end, my dear Wallingford, was admitted by all the clergy to be one of the most edifying known in the place for years."

"And Mrs. Bradfort has left you her heir? It is now time to congratulate you

on your good fortune. As I understand her estate came through females to her, and from a common ancestor of hers and yours, there is not the slightest reason why you should not be gratified by the bequest. But Lucy—I hope she was not *altogether* forgotten?"

Rupert fidgeted, and I could see that he was on tenterhooks. As I afterward discovered, he wished to conceal the real facts from the world; and yet he could not but foresee that I would probably learn them from his father. Under all the circumstances, therefore, he fancied it best to make me a confidant. We were strolling between Trinity and Paul's church walks, then the most fashionable promenade in town; and, before he would lay open his secret, my companion led me over by the Oswego Market, and down Maiden Lane, lest he might betray himself to the more fashionable stocks and stones. He did not open his lips until clear of the market, when he laid bare his budget of griefs in something that more resembled his old confidential manner than he had seen fit to exhibit in the earlier part of our interview.

"You must know, Miles," he commenced, "that Mrs. Bradfort was a very peculiar woman—a very peculiar sort of a person, indeed. An excellent lady I am ready to allow, and one that made a remarkably edifying end—but one whose peculiarities, I have understood, she inherited with her fortune. Women *do* get the oddest conceits into their heads, you know, and *American* women before all others; a republic being anything but favorable to the continuations of property in the same line. Miss Merton, who is a girl of excellent sense, as you well know yourself, Miles, says, now in England I should have succeeded, quite as a matter of course, to *all* Mrs. Bradfort's real estate."

"You, as a lawyer, a common-law lawyer, can scarcely require the opinion of an English woman to tell you what the English laws would do in a question of descent."

"Oh! they've a plaguey sight of statutes in that country as well as ourselves. Between the two, the common law is getting to be a very uncommon sort of a law. But, to cut the matter short, Mrs. Bradfort made a *will*——"

"Dividing her property equally between you and Lucy, I dare say, to Miss Merton's great dissatisfaction."

"Why, not just so, Miles, not exactly so; a very capricious, peculiar woman was Mrs. Bradfort—"

I have often remarked, when a person has succeeded in throwing dust into another's eyes, but is discarded on being found out, that the rejected of principle is very apt to accuse his former dupe of being *capricious*, when in fact he has only been *deceived*. As I said nothing, however, leaving Rupert to flounder on in the best manner he could, the latter, after a pause, proceeded.

"But her end was very admirable," he said, "and to the last degree edifying. You must know she made a will, and in that will she left everything, even to the town and country-houses, to—my sister."

I was thunderstruck! Here were all my hopes blown again to the winds. After a long pause, I resumed the discourse.

"And whom did she leave as executor?" I asked, instantly foreseeing the consequences should that office be devolved on Rupert himself.

"My father. The old gentleman has had his hands full between your father and mother and Mrs. Bradfort. Fortunately the estate of the last is in a good condition and is easily managed. Almost entirely in stores and houses in the best part of the town, well insured, a few thousands in stocks, and as much in bonds and mortgages, the savings from the income, and something like a year's rents in bank. A good seven thousand a year, with enough surplus to pay for repairs, collections, and other charges."

"And all this, then, is Lucy's!" I exclaimed, feeling something like the bitterness of knowing that such an heiress was not for me.

"Temporarily, though of course I consider Lucy as only my trustee for half of it. You know how it is with the women;

they fancy all us young men spendthrifts, and so between the two they have reasoned in this way—'Rupert is a good fellow at bottom, but Rupert is young, and he will make the money fly; now, I'll give it all to you, Lucy, in my will, but of course you'll take care of your brother, and let him have half, or perhaps two-thirds, being a male, at the proper time, which will be as soon as you come of age and can convey.' You understand Lucy is but nineteen, and *cannot* convey these two years."

"And Lucy admits this to be true? You have proof of all this?"

"Proof! I'd take my own affidavit of it. You see it is reasonable, and what I had a right to expect. Everything tends to confirm it. Between ourselves I had quite $2,000 of debt, and yet you see the good lady did not leave me a dollar to pay even my honest creditors, a circumstance that so pious a woman, and one who made so edifying an end, would never think of doing without ulterior views. Considering Lucy as my trustee explains the whole thing."

"I thought Mrs. Bradfort made you an allowance, Rupert; some $600 a year, besides keeping you in her own house?"

"A thousand; but what is $1,000 a year to a fashionable man in a town like this. First and last, the excellent old lady gave me about $5,000, all of which confirms the idea, that at the bottom she intended me for her heir. What woman in her senses would think of giving $5,000 to a relative to whom she did not contemplate giving *more?* The thing is clear on its face, and I should certainly go into chancery with anybody but Lucy."

"And Lucy! what says she to your views on the subject of Mrs. Bradfort's intentions?"

"Why, you have some acquaintance with Lucy—used to be intimate with her, as one might say, when children, and know something of her character." This to me, who fairly worshiped the earth on which the dear girl trod! "She never indulges in professions, and likes to take people by surprise when she contemplates doing them a service"—this was just as far from Lucy's natural and honest mode of dealing as it was possible to be—"and so she has been as mum as one who has lost the faculty of speech. However, she never speaks of her affairs to others; *that* is a good sign, and indicates an intention to consider herself as my trustee; and, what is better still, and more plainly denotes what her conscience dictates in the premises, she has empowered her father to pay all my debts; the current income and loose cash being at her disposal at once. It would have been better had she given me the money to satisfy these creditors with it, for I knew which had waited the longest and were best entitled to receive the dollars at once; but, it's something to have all their receipts in my pocket, and to start fair again. Thank Heaven, that much is already done. To do Lucy justice, moreover, she allows me $1,500 a year. *ad interim.* Now, Miles, I've conversed with you as with an old friend, and because I knew my father would tell you the whole when you got up to Clawbonny; but you will take it all in strict confidence. It gives a fashionable young fellow so silly an air to be thought dependent on a sister; and she three years younger than himself! So I have hinted the actual state of the case round among my friends; but, it is generally believed that I am in possession already, and that Lucy is dependent on me instead of my being dependent on her. The idea, moreover, is capital for keeping off fortune hunters, as you will see at a glance."

"And will the report satisfy a certain Mr. Andrew Drewett?" I asked, struggling to assume a composure I was far from feeling. "He was all attention when I sailed, and I almost expected to hear there was no longer a Lucy Hardinge."

"To tell you the truth, Miles, I thought so, too, until the death of Mrs. Bradfort. The mourning, however, most opportunely came to put a stop to anything of the sort, were it even contemplated. It would be so awkward, you will understand, to have a brother-in-law before everything is settled, and the trust is accounted for. *Au reste*—I am very well satisfied with

Andrew, and let him know I am his friend; he is well connected; fashionable; has a pretty little fortune; and, as I sometimes tell Lucy, that he is intended for her, as Mrs. Bradfort, no doubt, foresaw, inasmuch as his estate, added to just one-third of that of our dear departed cousin, would just make up the present income. On my honor, now, I do not think the difference would be five hundred dollars per annum."

"And how does your sister receive your hints?"

"Oh! famously—just as all girls do, you know. She blushes, and sometimes she looks vexed; then she smiles, and puts up her lip, and says 'Nonsense!' and 'What folly! Rupert, I'm surprised at you!' and all that sort of stuff, which deceives nobody, you'll understand, not even her poor, simple, silly brother. But, Miles, I must quit you now, for I have an engagement to accompany a party to the theater, and was on my way to join them when we met. Cooper plays, and you know what a lion *he* is; one would not wish to lose a syllable of his Othello."

"Stop, Rupert!—one word more before we part. From your conversation, I gather that the Mertons are still here?"

"The Mertons! Why, certainly; established in the land, and among its tip-top people. The colonel finds his health benefited by the climate, and he has managed to get some appointment which keeps him among us. He has Boston relatives, moreover, and I believe is fishing up some claims to property in that quarter. The Mertons here, indeed! What would New York be without the Mertons?"

"And my old friend the major is promoted, too—you called him colonel, I think?"

"Did I? I believe he is oftener called *General* Merton than anything else. You must be mistaken about his being only a major, Miles; everybody *here* calls him either colonel or general."

"Never mind; I hope it is as you say. Good-by, Rupert, I'll not betray you, and——"

"Well—you were about to say——"

"Why, mention me to Lucy; you know we were acquainted when children. Tell her I wish her all happiness in her new position, to which I do not doubt she will do full credit; and that I shall endeavor to see her before I sail again."

"You will not be at the theater this evening? Cooper is well worth seeing—a most famous Othello!"

"I think not. Do not forget to mention me to your sister; and so, once more, adieu!"

We parted; Rupert to go toward Broadway, at a great pace, and I to lounge along, uncertain whither to proceed. I had sent Neb to inquire if the *Wallingford* were down, and understood she would leave the basin at sunrise. It was now my intention to go up in her; for, though I attached no great importance to any of Rupert's facts, his report concerning my sister's health rendered me exceedingly uneasy. Insensibly I continued my course down Maiden Lane, and soon found myself near the ship. I went on board, had an explanation with Marble, gave some orders to Neb, and went ashore again, all in the course of the next half hour. By a sort of secret attraction, I was led toward the Park, and soon found myself at the door of the theater. Mrs. Bradfort had now been dead long enough to put Lucy in second morning, and I fancied I might get a view of her in the party that Rupert was to accompany. Buying a ticket, I entered and made my way up into the Shakespeare box. Had I been better acquainted with the place, with the object in view, I should have gone into the pit.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the season, it was a very full house. Cooper's, in that day, was a name that filled every mouth, and he seldom failed to fill every theater in which he appeared. With many first-rate qualifications for his art, and a very respectable conception of his characters, he threw everything like competition behind him; though there were a few, as there ever will be among the superlatively intellectual, who affected to see excellences in Fennell, and others, to which this great actor could not aspire.

The public decided against these select few, and, as is invariably the case when the appeal is made to human feelings, the public decided right. Puffery will force into notice, and sustain a false judgment, in such matters, for a brief space; but nature soon asserts her sway, and it is by natural decisions that such points are ever the most justly determined. Whatever appeals to human sympathies will be answered by human sympathies. Popularity too often gains its ascendency behind the hypocrite's mask in religion; it is usually a magnificent mystification in politics; it frequently becomes the patriot's stalking horse, on which he rides to power; in social life, it is the reward of empty smiles, unmeaning bows, and hollow squeezes of the hand; but with the player, the poet, and all whose pursuits bring them directly in contact with the passions, the imagination, and the heart, it is the unerring test of merit, with certain qualifications connected with the mind and the higher finish of pure art. It may be questioned if Cooper were not the greatest actor of his day, in a certain range of his own characters.

I have said that the house was full. I got a good place, however; though it was not in the front row. Of course, I could only see the side boxes beneath, and not even quite all of them. My eyes ran eagerly over them, and I soon caught a glimpse of the fine, curling hair of Rupert. He sat by the side of Emily Merton, the major—I knew he was a colonel or general only by means of a regular Manhattan promotion, which is so apt to make hundreds of counts, copper captains, and traveling prodigies of those who are very small folk at home—the major sat next, and, at his side, I saw a lady, whom I at once supposed to be Lucy. Every nerve in my system thrilled, as I caught even this indistinct view of the dear creature. I could just see the upper part of her face, as it was occasionally turned toward the major; and once I caught that honest smile of hers, which I knew had never intentionally deceived.

The front seat of the box had two vacant places. The bench would hold six, while it had yet only four. The audience, however, was still assembling, and, presently, a stir in Lucy's box denoted the arrival of company. The whole party moved, and Andrew Drewett handed an elderly lady in, his mother, as I afterward ascertained, and took the other place himself. I watched the salutations that were exchanged, and understood that the new comers had been expected. The places had been reserved for them, and old Mrs. Drewett was doubtless the *chaperone;* though one having a brother and the other a father with her, the two young ladies had not hesitated about preceding the elderly lady. They had come from different quarters of the town, and had agreed to meet at the theater. Old Mrs. Drewett was very particular in shaking hands with Lucy, though I had the misery of seeing her son go through the same ceremony. Still he was sufficiently pointed in his salutations; and, during the movements, I perceived he managed to get next to Lucy, leaving the major to entertain his mother. All this was natural, and what might have been expected; yet it gave me a pang that I cannot describe.

I sat, for half an hour, perfectly inattentive to the play, meditating on the nature of my real position toward Lucy. I recalled the days of childhood and early youth; the night of my first departure from home; my return, and the incidents accompanying my second departure; the affair of the locket, and all that I had supposed Lucy herself to feel, on those several occasions. Could it be possible I had so much deceived myself, and that the interest the dear girl had certainly manifested in me had been nothing but the fruits of her naturally warm and honest heart—her strong disposition to frankness—*habit*, as Rupert had so gently hinted in reference to ourselves?

Then I could not conceal from myself the bitter fact that I was, now, no equal match for Lucy, in the eyes of the world. While she was poor, and I comparatively rich, the inequality in social station might have been overlooked; it existed certainly, but was not so very marked that it might not, even in that day, be readily

forgotten; but now, Lucy was an heiress, had much more than double my own fortune—had a *fortune*, indeed; while I was barely in easy circumstances, as persons of the higher classes regarded wealth. The whole matter seemed reversed. It was clear that a sailor like myself, with no peculiar advantages, those of a tolerable education expected, and who was necessarily so much absent, had not the same chances of preferring his suit as one of your town idlers; a nominal lawyer, for instance, who dropped in at his office for an hour or two, just after breakfast, and promenaded Broadway the rest of the time, until dinner; or a man of entire leisure, like Andrew Drewett, who belonged to the City Library set, and had no other connection with business than to see that his rents were collected and his dividends paid. The more I reflected, the more humble I became, the less my chances seemed, and I determined to quit the theater at once. The reader will remember that I was New York born and bred, a state of society in which few natives acted on the principle that "there was nothing too high to be aspired to, nothing too low to be done." I admitted I had superiors, and was willing to defer to the facts and opinions of the world as I knew it.

In the lobby of the building, I experienced a pang at the idea of quitting the place without getting one look at the face of Lucy. I was in an humble mood, it is true, but that did not necessarily infer a total self-denial. I determined, therefore, to pass into the pit, with my box-check, feast my eyes by one long gaze at the dear creature's ingenuous countenance, and carry away the impression, as a lasting memorial of her whom I so well loved, and whom I felt persuaded I should ever continue to love. After this indulgence, I would studiously avoid her, in order to release my thoughts as much as possible from the perfect thraldom in which they had existed ever since I had heard of Mrs. Bradfort's death. Previously to that time I am afraid I had counted a little more than was becoming on the ease of my own circumstances, and Lucy's comparative poverty. Not that I had ever supposed her to be in the least mercenary—this I knew to be utterly, totally false—but because the good town of Manhattan, even in 1803, was *tant soit peu* addicted to dollars, and Lucy's charms would not be likely to attract so many suitors, in the modest setting of a poor country clergyman's means as in the golden frame by which they had been surrounded by Mrs. Bradfort's testamentary devise, even supposing Rupert to come in for quite one-half.

I had no difficulty in finding a convenient place in the pit; one from which I got a front and near view of the whole six, as they sat ranged side by side. Of the major and old Mrs. Drewett it is unnecessary to say much. The latter looked as all dowager-like widows of that day used to appear—respectable, staid, and richly attired. The good lady had come on the stage during the Revolution, and had a slightly military air—a *parade* in her graces that was not altogether unknown to the *élèves* of that school. I dare say she could use such words as "martinets," "mohairs," "brigadiers," and other terms familiar to her class. Alas! how completely all these little traces of the past are disappearing from our habits and manners!

As for the major, he appeared much better in health, and altogether altered in mien. I could readily detect the influence of the world on him. He was evidently a so much greater man in New York than he had been when I found him in London, that it is not wonderful he felt the difference. Between the acts, I remarked that all the principal persons in the front rows were desirous of exchanging nods with the "British officer," a proof that he was circulating freely in the best set, and had reached a point when "not to know him, argues yourself unknown." *

* The miserable moral dependence of this country on Great Britain, forty years since, cannot well be brought home to the present generation. It is still too great, but has not a tithe of its former force. The writer has himself known an Italian prince, a man of family and of high personal merit, pass unnoticed before a society that was eager to make the acquaintance of most of the "agents" of the Bir-

Emily certainly looked well and happy. I could see that she was delighted with Rupert's flattery, and I confess I cared very little for his change of sentiment or his success. That both Major and Emily Merton were different persons in the midst of the world and in the solitudes of the Pacific, was as evident as it was that I was a different personage in command of the *Crisis* and in the pit of the Park Theater. I dare say, at that moment, Miss Merton had nearly forgotten that such a man as Miles Wallingford existed, though I think she sometimes recalled the string of magnificent pearls that were to ornament the neck of his wife, should he ever find any one to have him.

But Lucy, dear, upright, warm-hearted, truth-telling, beloved Lucy! all this time I forgot to speak of her. There she sat in maiden loveliness, her beauty still more developed, her eye as beaming, lustrous, feeling, as ever, her blush as sensitve, her smile as sweet, and her movements as natural and graceful. The simplicity of her half mourning, too, added to her beauty, which was of a character to require no further aid from dress, than such as was dependent purely on taste. As I gazed at her, inthralled, I fancied nothing was wanting to complete the appearance but my own necklace. Powerful, robust man as I was, with my frame hardened by exposure and trials, I could have sat down and wept, after gazing some time at the precious creature, under the feeling produced by the conviction that I was never to renew my intercourse with her, on terms of intimacy at least.

The thought that from day to day we were to become more and more strangers, was almost too much to be borne. As it was, scalding tears forced themselves to my eyes, though I succeeded in concealing the weakness from those around me. At length the tragedy terminated, the curtain dropped, and the audience began to move about. The pit, which had just before been crowded, was now nearly empty, and I was afraid of being seen. Still, I could not tear myself away, but remained after nine-tenths of those around me had gone into the lobbies.

It was easy now to see the change which had come over Lucy's position, in the attentions she received. All the ladies in the principal boxes had nods and smiles for her, and half the fashionable-looking young men in the house crowded round her box, or actually entered it to pay their compliments. I fancied Andrew Drewett had a self-satisfied air that seemed to say, "you are paying your homage indirectly to myself, in paying it to this young lady." As for Lucy, my jealous watchfulness could not detect the smallest alteration in her deportment, so far as simplicity and nature were concerned. She appeared in a trifling degree more womanly, perhaps, than when I saw her last, being now in her twentieth year, but the attentions she received made no visible change in her manners. I had become lost in the scene, and was standing in a musing attitude, my side face toward the box, when I heard a suppressed exclamation in Lucy's voice. I was too near her to be mistaken, and it caused the blood to rush to my heart in a torrent. Turning, I saw the dear girl, with her hand extended over the front of the box, her face suffused with blushes, and her eyes riveted on myself. I was recognized, and the sur-

mingham button dealers; and this simply because one came from Italy and the other from England. The following anecdote, which is quite as true as any other fact in this work, furnishes a good example of what is meant. It is now a quarter of a century since the writer's first book appeared. Two or three months after the publication, he was walking down Broadway with a friend, when a man of much distinction in the New York city circles was passing up on the other sidewalk. The gentleman in question caught the writer's eye, bowed, and *crossed the street*, to shake hands and inquire after the author's health. The difference in years made this attention marked. "You are in high favor," observed the friend, as the two walked away, "to have —— pay you such a compliment—your book must have done this." "Now, mark my words—I have been puffed in some English magazine and —— knows it." The two were on their way to the author's publishers, and, on entering the door, honest Charles Wiley put a puff on the book in question into the writer's hand. What rendered the whole more striking, was the fact that the paragraph was as flagrant a puff as was ever written, and had probably been paid for, by the English publisher. The gentleman in question was a man of talents and merit, but he had been born half a century too soon to enjoy entire mental independence in a country that had so recently been a colony.

prise had produced a display of all that old *friendship*, certainly, that had once existed between us, in the simplicity and truth of childhood.

"Miles Wallingford!" she said, as I advanced to shake the offered hand, and as soon as I was near enough to permit her to speak without attracting too much attention—"*you* have arrived, and we knew nothing of it!"

It was plain Rupert had said nothing of having seen me, or of an interview in the street. He seemed a little ashamed, and leaned forward to say,

"I declare I forgot to mention, Lucy, that I met Captain Wallingford as I was going to join the colonel and Miss Merton. Oh! we have had a long talk together, and it will save you a history of past events."

"I may, nevertheless, say," I rejoined, "how happy I am to see Miss Hardinge looking so well, and to be able to pay my compliments to my old passengers."

Of course I shook hands with the major and Emily, bowed to Drewett, was named to his mother, and was invited to enter the box, as it was not quite in rule to be conversing between the pit and the front rows. I forgot my prudent resolutions, and was behind Lucy in three minutes. Andrew Drewett had the civility to offer me his place, though it was with an air that said plain enough, "what do *I* care for *him?* he is a ship-master, and I am a man of fashion and fortune, and can resume my seat at any moment, while the poor fellow can only catch his chances, as he occasionally *comes into port.*" At least, I fancied his manner said something like this.

"Thank you, Mr. Drewett," said Lucy, in her sweetest manner. "Mr. Wallingford and I are very, *very* old friends; you know he is Grace's brother, and you have been at Clawbonny"—Drewett bowed, civilly enough—"and I have a thousand things to say to him. So, Miles, take this seat, and let me hear all about your voyage."

As half the audience went away as soon as the tragedy ended, the second seat of the box was vacated, and the other gentlemen getting on it, to stretch their limbs, I had abundance of room to sit at Lucy's side, half facing her, at the same time. As she insisted on hearing my story, before we proceeded to anything else, I was obliged to gratify her.

"By the way, Major Merton," I cried, as the tale was closed, "an old friend of yours, Moses Marble by name, has come to life again, and is at this moment in New York."

I then related the manner in which I had fallen in with my old mate. This was a most unfortunate self-interruption for me, giving the major a fair opportunity for cutting into the conversation. The orchestra, moreover, giving notice that the curtain would soon rise for the afterpiece, the old gentleman soon got me into the lobby to hear the particulars. I was supremely vexed, and I thought Lucy appeared sorry; but there was no help for it, and then we could not converse while the piece was going on.

"I suppose you care little for this silly farce," observed the major, looking in at one of the windows, after I had gone over Marble's affair, in detail. "If not, we will continue our walk, and wait for the ladies to come out. Drewett and Hardinge will take good care of them."

I assented, and we continued to walk the lobby till the end of the act. Major Merton was always gentleman-like; and he even behaved to me as if he remembered the many obligations he was under. He now communicated several little facts connected with his own circumstances, alluding to the probability of his remaining in America a few years. Our chat continued some time, my looks frequently turning toward the door of the box, when my companion suddenly observed:

"Your old acquaintance, the Hardinges, have had a lucky windfall—one, I fancy, they hardly expected a few years since."

"Probably not! though the estate has fallen into excellent hands," I answered. "I am surprised, however, that Mrs. Bradfort did not leave the property to the old gentleman, as it once belonged to their common grandfather, and he properly stood next in succession."

"I fancy she thought the good parson would not know what to do with it. Now, Rupert Hardinge is clever, and spirited, and in a way to make a figure in the world; and it is probably in better hands than if it had been left first to the old gentleman."

"The old gentleman has been a faithful steward to me, and I doubt not would have proved equally so to his own children. But, does Rupert get *all* Mrs. Bradfort's property?"

"I believe not; there is some sort of a trust, I have heard him say; and I rather fancy that his sister has some direct, or reversionary interest. Perhaps she is named as the heir, if he die without issue. There *was* a silly story, that Mrs. Bradfort had left everything to Lucy; but I have it from the best authority that *that* is not true." The idea of Rupert Hardinge being the "best authority" for anything; a fellow who never knew what unadulterated truth was, from the time he was in petticoats, or could talk! "As I *know* there is a trust, though one of no great moment, I presume Lucy has some contingent interest, subject, most probably, to her marrying with her brother's approbation, or some such provision. The old lady was sagacious, and no doubt did all that was necessary."

It is wonderful how people daily deceive themselves on the subject of property; those who care the most about it appearing to make the greatest blunders. In the way of bequests, in particular, the lies that are told are marvelous. It is now many years since I learned to take no heed of rumors on such subjects, and least of all, rumors that come from the class of the money-gripers. Such people refer everything to dollars, and seldom converse a minute without using the word. Here, however, was Major Merton evidently Rupert's dupe; though with what probable consequences it was not in my power to foresee. It was clearly not my business to undeceive him; and the conversation getting to be embarrassing, I was not sorry to hear the movement which announced the end of the act. At the box door, to my great regret, we met Mrs. Drewett retiring, the ladies finding the farce dull, and not worth the time lost in listening to it. Rupert gave me an uneasy glance, and he even dragged me aside to whisper, "Miles, what I told you this evening, is strictly a family secret, and was intrusted to a friend."

"I have nothing to do with your private concerns, Rupert," I answered, "only, let me expect you to act honorably, especially when women are concerned."

"Everything will come right, depend on it; the truth will set everything right, and all will come out just as I predicted."

I saw Lucy looking anxiously around, while Drewett had gone to order the carriages to advance, and I hoped it might be for me. In a moment I was by her side; at the next, Mr. Andrew Drewett offered his arm, saying, her carriage "stopped the way." We moved into the outer lobby in a body, and then it was found that Mrs. Drewett's carriage was up first, while Lucy's was in the rear. Yes, Lucy's carriage!—the dear girl having come into immediate possession of her relative's houses, furniture, horses, carriages, and everything else, without reserve, just as they had been left behind by the last incumbent, when she departed from the scene of life to lie down in the grave. Mrs. Bradfort's arms were still on the chariot, I observed, its owner refusing all Rupert's solicitations to supplant them by those of Hardinge. The latter took his revenge, however, by telling everybody how generous he was in keeping a carriage for his sister.

The major handed Mrs. Drewett in, and her son was compelled to say good-night, to see his mother home. This gave me one blessed minute with Lucy, by herself. She spoke of Grace; said they had now been separated months, longer than they ever had been before in their lives, and that all her own persuasions could not induce my sister to rejoin her in town, while her own wish to visit Clawbonny had been constantly disappointed, Rupert insisting that her presence was necessary for so many arrangements about business.

"Grace is not as humble as I was in old times, Miles," said the dear girl, look-

ing me in the face half sadly, half reproachfully, the light of the lamp falling full on her tearful, tender eyes, "and I hope you are not about to imitate her bad example. She wishes us to know she has Clawbonny for a home, but I never hesitated to admit how poor we were, while you alone were rich."

"God bless you, Lucy!" I whispered, squeezing her hand with fervor. "It cannot be *that*—have you heard anything of Grace's health?"

"Oh! she is well, I know—Rupert tells me *that*, and her letters are cheerful and kind as ever, without a word of complaint. But I *must* see her soon. Grace Wallingford and Lucy Hardinge were not born to live asunder. Here is the carriage; I shall see you in the morning, Miles, at breakfast, say eight o'clock precisely."

"It will be impossible. I sail for Clawbonny with the first of the flood, and that will make at four. I shall sleep in the sloop."

Major Merton put Lucy into the carriage, the good nights were passed, and I was left standing on the lowest step of the building, gazing after the carriage, Rupert walking swiftly away.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Hear me a little;
For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions start
Into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness bear away those blushes."
—SHAKESPEARE.

I REACHED the *Wallingford* before eleven, where I found Neb in attendance with my trunks and other effects. Being now on board my own craft, I gave orders to profit by a favorable turn in the wind, and to get under way at once instead of waiting for the flood. When I left the deck the sloop was above the State Prison, a point toward which the town itself had made considerable progress since the time I first introduced it to the reader. Notwithstanding this early start, we did not enter the creek until about eight in the morning of the second day.

No sooner was the vessel near enough, than my foot was on the wharf, and I began to ascend the hill. From the summit of the latter I saw my late guardian hurrying along the road, it afterward appearing that a stray paper from town had announced the arrival of the *Dawn*, and that I was expected to come up in the sloop. I was received with extended hands, was kissed just as if I had still been a boy, and heard the guileless old man murmuring his blessings on me, and a prayer of thankfulness. Nothing ever changed good Mr. Hardinge, who, now that he could command the whole income of his daughter, was just as well satisfied to live on the three or four hundreds he got from his glebe and his parish as he ever had been in his life.

"Welcome back, my dear boy, welcome back!" added Mr. Hardinge, his voice and manner still retaining their fervor. "I said you *must*—you *would* be on board, as soon as they reported the sloop in sight, for I judged your heart by my own. Ah! Miles, will the time ever come when Clawbonny will be good enough for you? You have already as much money as you can want, and more will scarce contribute to your happiness."

"Speaking of money, my dear sir," I answered, "while I have to regret the loss of your respectable kinswoman, I may be permitted to congratulate you on the accession to an old family property. I understand you inherit, in your family, all of Mrs. Bradfort's estate—one valuable in amount, and highly acceptable no doubt, as having belonged to your ancestors."

"No doubt—no doubt—it is just as you say; and I hope these unexpected riches will leave us as devout servants of God as I humbly trust they found us. The property, however, is not mine, but Lucy's; I need not have any reserve with you, though Rupert has hinted it might be prudent not to let the precise state of the case be known, since it might bring a swarm of interested fortune-hunters about the dear girl, and has proposed

that we rather favor the notion the estate is to be divided among us. This I cannot do directly, you will perceive, as it would be deception; but one may be silent. With you, however, it is a different matter, and so I tell you the truth at once. I am made executor, and act, of course; and this makes me the more glad to see you, for I find so much business with pounds, shillings, and pence, draws my mind off from the duties of my holy office, and that I am in danger of becoming selfish and mercenary. A selfish priest, Miles, is as odious a thing as a mercenary woman!"

"Little danger of your ever becoming anything so worldly, my dear sir. But Grace—you have not mentioned my beloved sister?"

I saw Mr. Hardinge's countenance suddenly change. The expression of joy instantly deserted it, and it wore an air of uncertainty and sadness. A less observant man than the good divine, in all the ordinary concerns of life, did not exist; but it was apparent that he now saw something to trouble him.

"Yes, Grace," he answered, doubtingly; "the dear girl is here, and all alone, and not as blithe and amusing as formerly. I am glad of your return on her account, too, Miles. She is not well, I fear; I would have sent for a physician last week, or the moment I saw her; but she insists on it, there is no need of one. She is frightfully beautiful, Miles! You know how it is with Grace—her countenance always seemed more fitted for heaven than earth; and now it always reminds me of a seraph's that was grieving over the sins of men!"

"I fear, sir, that Rupert's account, then, is true, and that Grace is seriously ill."

"I hope not, boy—I fervently pray not! She is not as usual—*that* is true; but her mind, her thoughts, all her inclinations, and, if I may so express it, her energies, seem turned to heaven. There has been an awakening in the spirit of Grace that is truly wonderful. She reads devout books, meditates, and, I make no doubt, prays, from morn till night. This is the secret of her withdrawal from the world, and her refusing of all Lucy's invitations. You know how the girls love each other—but Grace declines going to Lucy, though she knows that Lucy cannot come to her."

I now understood it all. A weight like that of a mountain fell upon my heart, and I walked on some distance without speaking. To me, the words of my excellent guardian sounded like the knell of a sister I almost worshiped.

"And Grace—does she expect me now?" I at length ventured to say, though the words were uttered in tones so tremulous, that even the usually unobservant divine perceived the change.

"She does, and delighted she was to hear it. The only thing of a worldly nature that I have heard her express of late, was some anxious, sisterly wish for your speedy return. Grace loves you, Miles, next to her God!"

Oh! how I wished this were true, but, alas! alas! I knew it was far otherwise!

"I see you are disturbed, my dear boy, on account of what I have said," resumed Mr. Hardinge; "probably from serious apprehensions about your sister's health. She is not well, I allow; but it is the effect of mental ailments. The precious creature has had too vivid views of her own sinful nature, and has suffered deeply, I fear. I trust my conversation and prayers have not been without their effect, through the divine aid, and that she is now more cheerful—nay, she has assured me within half an hour, if it turned out that you were in the sloop, she should be happy!"

For my life, I could not have conversed longer on the painful subject; I made no reply. As we had still a considerable distance to walk, I was glad to turn the conversation to other subjects, lest I should become unmanned, and sit down to weep in the middle of the road.

"Does Lucy intend to visit Clawbonny this summer?" I asked, though it seemed strange to me to suppose that the farm was not actually Lucy's home. I am afraid I felt a jealous dislike to the idea that the dear creature should have houses

and lands of her own; or any that were not to be derived through me.

"I hope so," answered her father, "though her new duties do not leave Lucy as much her own mistress as I could wish. You saw her and her brother, Miles, I take it for granted?"

"I met Rupert in the street, sir, and had a short interview with the Mertons and Lucy at the theater. Young Mr. and old Mrs. Drewett were of the party."

The good divine turned short round to me, and looked as conscious and knowing as one of his singleness of mind and simplicity of habits could look. Had a knife penetrated my flesh, I could not have winced more than I did; still I affected a manner that was very foreign to my feelings.

"What do you think of this young Mr. Drewett, boy?" asked Mr. Hardinge, with an air of confidential interest and an earnestness of manner that, with him, was inseparable from all that concerned his daughter. "Do you approve?"

"I believe I understand you, sir; you mean me to infer that Mr. Drewett is a suitor for Miss Hardinge's hand."

"It would be improper to say this much even to you, Miles, did not Drewett take good care, himself, to let everybody know it."

"Possibly with a view to keep off other pretenders," I rejoined, with a bitterness I could not control.

Now Mr. Hardinge was one of the last men in the world to suspect evil. He looked surprised, therefore, at my remark, and I was probably not much out of the way in fancying that he looked displeased.

"That is not right, my dear boy," he said gravely. "We should try to think the best, and not the worst, of our fellow-creatures." Excellent old man, how faithfully didst thou practice on thy precept! "It is a wise rule, and a safe one; more particularly in connection with our own weaknesses. Then it is but natural that Drewett should wish to secure Lucy; and if he adopt no means less manly than frank avowal of his own attachment, surely there is no ground of complaint."

I was rebuked; and, what is more, I felt that the rebuke was merited. As some atonement for my error, I hastened to add:

"Very truly, sir; I admit the unfairness of my remark, and can only atone for it by adding, it is quite apparent Mr. Drewett is not influenced by interested motives, since he certainly was attentive to Miss Hardinge previously to Mrs. Bradfort's death, and when he could not possibly have anticipated the nature of her will."

"Quite true, Miles, and very properly and justly remarked. Now, to you, who have known Lucy from childhood, and who regard her much as Rupert does, it may not seem so very natural that a young man can love her warmly and strongly, for herself, alone; such is apt to be the effect of brotherly feeling; but I can asure you, Lucy is really a charming, as we all know, she is a most excellent girl!"

"To whom are you speaking thus, sir? I can assure you, nothing is easier than for me to conceive how possible it is for any man to love your daughter. As respects Grace, I confess there is a difference; for I affirm she has always seemed to me too saintly, too much allied to heaven already, to be subject, herself, to the passions of earth."

"That is what I have just been telling you, and we must endeavor to overcome and humanize—if I may so express it—Grace's propensity. There is nothing more dangerous to a healthful frame of mind, in a religious point of view, Miles, than excitement—it is disease, and not faith, nor charity, nor hope, nor humility, nor anything that is commanded, but our native weaknesses taking a wrong direction, under a physical impulse, rather than the fruits of repentance, and the succor afforded by the Spirit of God. We nowhere read of any excitement, and howlings, and wailings among the Apostles."

How could I enlighten the good old man on the subject of my sister's malady? That Grace, with her well-tempered mind, was the victim of religious exaggeration, I did not for a moment believe; but that she had had her heart blighted, her affec-

tions withered, her hopes deceived, by Rupert's levity and interestedness, his worldly-mindedness and vanity, I could foresee and was prepared to learn; though these were facts not to be communicated to the father of the offender. I made no answer, but managed to turn the conversation toward the farm, and those interests about which I could affect an interest that I was very far from feeling just at that moment. This induced the divine to inquire into the result of my late voyage, and enabled me to collect sufficient fortitude to meet Grace with the semblance of firmness at least.

Mr. Hardinge made a preconcerted signal, as soon as he came in view of the house, that apprised its inmates of my arrival; and we knew, while still half a mile from the buildings, that the news had produced a great commotion. All the blacks met us on the little lawn—for the girls, since reaching womanhood, had made this change in the old door-yard—and I had to go through the process of shaking hands with every one of them. This was done amid hearty bursts of laughter, the mode in which the negroes of that day almost always betrayed their joy, and many a "welcome home, Masser Mile!" and "where Neb got to dis time, Masser Mile?" was asked by more than one; and great was the satisfaction when I told his generation and race that the faithful fellow would be up with the cart that was to convey my luggage. But Grace awaited me. I broke through the throng, and entered the house. In the door I was met by Chloe, a girl of about my own sister's age, and a sort of cousin of Neb's by the half-blood, who had been preferred of late years to functions somewhat resembling those of a lady's maid. I say of the half-blood, for, to own the truth, few of the New York blacks in that day could have taken from their brothers and sisters, under the old *dictum* of the common law, which declared that none but heirs of the whole blood should inherit. Chloe met me in the door-way, and greeted me with one of her sweetest smiles, as she courtesied, and really looked as pleased as all my slaves did, at seeing their *young* master again. How they touched my heart, at times, by their manner of talking about "*ole* Masser, and *ole* Missus," always subjects of regret among negroes who had been well treated by them. Metaphysicians may reason as subtly as they can about the races and colors, and on the aptitude of the black to acquire; but no one can ever persuade me out of the belief of their extraordinary aptitude to love. As between themselves and their masters, their own children and those of the race to which they were subject, I have often seen instances which have partaken of the attachment of the dog to the human family; and cases in which the children of their masters have been perferred to those of their own flesh and blood were of constant occurrence.

"I hope you been werry well, sah, Masser Mile," said Chloe, who had some extra refinement, as the growth of her position.

"Perfectly, my good girl, and I am glad to see you looking so well—you really are growing handsome, Chloe."

"Oh! Masser Mile—you so droll!—now you stay home, sah, long time?"

"I am afraid not, Chloe, but one never knows. Where shall I find my sister?"

"Miss Grace tell me come here, Masser Mile, and say she wish to see you in de family room. She wait dere, now, some time."

"Thank you, Chloe; and do you see that no one interrupts us. I have not seen my sister for near a year."

"Sartain, sah; all as you say." Then the girl, whose face shone like a black bottle that had just been dipped in water, showed her brilliant teeth, from ear to ear, laughed outright, looked foolish, after which she looked earnest, when the secret burst out of her heart, in the melodious voice of a young negress, that did not know whether to laugh or cry: "Where Neb, Masser Mile? what he do now, de *fel*-ler?"

"He will kiss you in ten minutes, Chloe; so put the best face on the matter you are able."

"*Dat* he won't—de sauce-box—Miss Grace teach me better than *dat*."

I waited to hear no more, but proceeded toward the triangular little room, with steps so hurried and yet so nervous, that I do not rememcer ever before to have laid my hand on a lock in a manner so tremulous—I found myself obliged to pause, ere I could muster resolution to open the door, a hope coming over me that the impatience of Grace would save me the trouble, and that I should find her in my arms before I should be called on to exercise any more fortitude. All was still as death, however, within the room, and I opened the door, as if I expected to find one of the bodies I had formerly seen in its coffin, in this last abiding place above ground, of one dead. My sister was on the *causeuse*, literally unable to rise from debility and agitation. I shall not attempt to describe the shock her appearance gave me. I was prepared for a change, but not one that placed her, as my heart instantly announced, so near the grave!

Grace extended both arms, and I threw myself at her side, drew her within my embrace, and folded her to my heart, with the tenderness with which one would have embraced an infant. In this situation we both wept violently, and I am not ashamed to say that I sobbed like a child. I dare say five minutes passed in this way, without either of us speaking a word.

"A merciful and all-gracious God be praised! You are restored to me in time, Miles!" murmured my sister, at length. "I was afraid it might be too late."

"Grace! Grace! what means this, love? My precious, my only, my most dearly beloved sister, why do I find you thus?"

"Is it necessary to speak, Miles?— cannot you see?—*do* you not see, and understand it all?"

The fervent pressure I gave my sister announced how plainly I comprehended the whole history. That Grace could ever love, and forget, I did not believe; but that her tenderness for Rupert—one whom I knew for so frivolous and selfish a being, should reduce her to this terrible state, I had not indeed foreseen as a thing possible. Little did I then understand how confidingly a woman loves, and how apt she is to endow the being of her choice with all the qualities she could wish him to possess. In the anguish of my soul I muttered, loud enough to be heard, "the heartless villain!"

Grace instantly rose from my arms. At that moment she looked more like a creature of heaven, than one that was still connected with this wicked world. Her beauty could scarcely be called impaired, though I dreaded that she would be snatched away from me in the course of the interview; so frail and weak did it appear was her hold of life. In some respects I never saw her more lovely than she seemed on this very occasion. This was when the hectic of disease imparted to the sweetest and most saint-like eyes that were ever set in the human countenance a species of holy illumination. Her countenance, now, was pale and colorless, however, and her look sorrowful and filled with reproach.

"Brother," she said, solemnly, "this *must* not be. It is not what God commands—it is not what I expected from you—what I have a right to expect from one whom I am assured loves me, though none other of earth can be said to do so."

"It is not easy, my sister, for a man to forget or forgive the wretch who has so long misled you—misled us all, and then turned to another, under the impulse of mere vanity."

"Miles, my kind and manly brother, listen to me," Grace rejoined, fervently pressing one of my hands in both of hers, and scarcely able to command herself, through alarm. "All thoughts of anger, of resentment, of pride even, must be forgotten. You owe it to my sex, to the dreadful imputations that might otherwise rest on my name—had I anything to reproach myself with as a woman. I could submit to *any* punishment; but surely, surely, it is not a sin so unpardonable to be unable to command the affections, that I deserve to have my name, after I shall be dead, mixed up with ru-

mors connected with such a quarrel. You have lived as brothers, too—then, there is good, excellent, truthful, pious Mr. Hardinge, who is yet *my* guardian, you know; and Lucy, dear, true-hearted, faithful Lucy——"

"Why is not dear, true-hearted, faithful Lucy, here, watching over you, Grace, at this very moment?" I demanded, huskily.

"She knows nothing of my situation—it is a secret, as well as its cause, from all but God, myself and you. Ah! I knew it would be impossible to deceive your love, Miles! which has ever been to me all that a sister could desire."

"And Lucy! how has *her* affection been deceived? Has she, too, eyes only for those she has recently learned to admire?"

"You do her injustice, brother. Lucy has not seen me since the great change that I can myself see has come over me. Another time I will tell you all. At present I can only say, that as soon as I had certain explanations with Rupert, I left town, and have studiously concealed from dear Lucy the state of my declining health. I write to her weekly, and get answers; everything passing between us as cheerfully, and, apparently, as happily as ever. No, do not blame Lucy; who, I am certain, would quit everything and everybody to come to me, had she the smallest notion of the truth. On the contrary, I believe she thinks I would rather not have her at Clawbonny, just at this moment, much as she knows I love her; for, one of Lucy's observation and opportunities cannot but suspect the truth. Let me lie on your breast, brother; it wearies me to talk so much."

I sat holding this beloved sister in my arms fully an hour, neither of us speaking. I was afraid of injuring her, by further excitement, and she was glad to take refuge in silence, from the feelings of maiden shame that could not be otherwise than mingled with such a dialogue. As my cheek leaned on her silken hair, I could see large tears rolling down the pallid cheeks; but the occasional pressure of the hands, told me how much she was gladdened by my presence. After some ten or fifteen minutes, the exhausted girl dropped into feverish and disturbed slumbers, that I would have remained motionless throughout the night to maintain. I am persuaded it was quite an hour before this scene terminated. Grace then arose and said, with one of her most angelic smiles:

"You see how it is with me, Miles—feeble as an infant, and almost as troublesome. You must bear with me, for you will be my nurse. One promise I must have, dearest, before we leave this room."

"It is yours, my sister, let it be what it may; I can now refuse you nothing," said I, melted to feminine tenderness. "And yet, Grace, since *you* exact a promise, *I* have a mind to attach a condition."

"What condition, Miles, can you attach, that I will refuse? I consent to everything, without even knowing your wishes."

"Then I promise not to call Rupert to an account for his conduct—not to question him—nay, even not to reproach him," I rejoined, enlarging my pledges, as I saw by Grace's eyes that she exacted still more.

The last promise, however, appeared fully to satisfy her. She kissed my hand, and I felt hot tears falling on it.

"Now name your conditions, dearest brother," she said, after a little time taken to recover herself; "name them, and see how gladly I shall accept them all."

"I have but one—it is this. I must take the complete direction of the care of you—must have power to send for what physician I please, what friends I please, what advice or regimen I please!"

"Oh! Miles, you *could* not—*cannot* think of sending for *him?*"

"Certainly not; his presence would drive me from the house. With that one exception, then, my condition is allowed?"

Grace made a sign of assent, and sunk on my bosom again, nearly exhausted with the scene through which she had just gone. I perceived it would not do to dwell any longer on the subject we had been alluding to, rather than discussing; and for another hour did I sit sustaining

that beloved form, declining to speak, and commanding silence on her part. At the end of this second little sleep Grace was more refreshed than she had been after her first troubled repose, and she declared herself able to walk to her room, where she wished to lie on her own bed until the hour of dinner. I summoned Chloe, and, together, we led the invalid to her chamber. As we threaded the long passages, my sister's head rested on my bosom, her eyes were turned affectionately upward to my face, and several times I felt the gentle pressure of her emaciated hands, given in the fervor of devoted sisterly love.

I needed an hour to compose myself after this interview. In the privacy of my own room I wept like a child over the wreck of a being I had left so beautiful and perfect, though even then the canker of doubt had begun to take root. I had yet her explanations to hear, and resolved to command myself so far as to receive them in a manner not to increase the pain Grace must feel in making them. As soon as sufficiently calm, I sat down to write letters. One was to Marble. I desired him to let the second mate see the ship discharged, and to come up to me by the return of the sloop. I wished to see him in person, as I did not think I could be able to go out in the vessel on her next voyage, and I intended him to sail in her as master. It was necessary we should consult together personally. I did not conceal the reason of this determination, though I said nothing of the cause of my sister's state. Marble had a list of physicians given him, and he was to bring up with him the one he could obtain, commencing with the first named and following in the order given. I had earned ten thousand dollars, net, by the labor of the past year, and I determined every dollar of it should be devoted to obtaining the best advice the country then afforded. I had sent for such men as Hosack, Post, Bayley, M'Knight, More, etc., and even thought of procuring Rush from Philadelphia, but was deterred from making the attempt by the distance and the pressing nature of the emergency.

In 1803 Philadelphia was about three days' journey from Clawbonny, even allowing for a favorable time on the river, with a moderately unfavorable, five or six, whereas the distance can now be passed, including the chances of meeting the departures and arrivals of the different lines, in from twelve to fifteen hours. Such is one of the prodigious effects of an improved civilization; and in all that relates to motion, and which falls short of luxury or great personal comfort, this country takes a high place in the scale of nations. That it is as much in arrears in other great essentials, however, particularly in what relates to tavern comforts, no man who is familiar with the better civilization of Europe can deny. It is a singular fact that we have gone backward in this last particular within the present century, and all owing to the gregarious habits of the population. But, to return to my painful theme, from which, even at this distance of time, I am only too ready to escape.

I was on the point of writing to Lucy, but hesitated. I hardly knew whether to summon her to Clawbonny or not. That she would come, and that instantly, the moment she was apprised of Grace's condition, I did not in the least doubt. I was not so mad as to do her character injustice, because I had my doubts about being loved as I had once hoped to be. That Lucy was attached to me, in one sense, I did not in the least doubt; this her late reception of me sufficiently proved, and I could not question her continued affection for Grace after all the latter had just told me. Even did Lucy prefer Andrew Drewett, it was no proof she was not just as kind-hearted, as ready to be of service, and as true in her friendship, as she ever had been. Still, she was Rupert's sister, must have penetration enough to understand the cause of Grace's illness, and might not enter as fully into her wrongs as one could wish in a person that was to watch the sick pillow. I resolved to learn more that day, before this portion of my duty was discharged.

Neb was summoned and sent to the wharf with an order to get the *Wallingford* ready to sail for town at the first

favorable moment. The sloop was merely to be in ballast, and was to return to Clawbonny with no unnecessary delay. There was an eminent but retired physician of the name of Bard, who had a country residence on the other bank of the Hudson, and within a few hours' sail from Clawbonny. I knew his character, though I was not acquainted with him personally. Few of us of the right bank, indeed, belonged to the circles of the left in that day; the increasing wealth and population of the country have since brought the western side into more notice. I wrote also to Dr. Bard, inclosing a check for a suitable fee, made a strong appeal to his feelings—which would have been quite sufficient with such a man—and ordered Neb to go out in the *Grace and Lucy* immediately to deliver the message. Just as this arrangement was completed, Chloe came to summon me to my sister's room.

I found Grace still lying on her bed, but stronger, and materially refreshed. For a moment I began to think my fears had exaggerated the danger, and that I was not to lose my sister. A few minutes of close observation, however, convinced me that the first impression was the true one. I am not skilled in the theories of the science, if there be any great science about it, and can hardly explain even now the true physical condition of Grace. She had pent up her sufferings in her own bosom for six cruel months in the solitude of a country-house, living most of the time entirely alone, and this, they tell me, is what few even of the most robust frames can do with impunity. Frail as she had ever seemed, her lungs were sound, and she spoke easily and with almost all her original force, so that her wasting away was not the consequence of anything pulmonary. I rather think the physical effects were to be traced to the unhealthy action of the fluids, which were deranged through the stomach and spleen. The insensible perspiration was affected also, I believe, the pores of the skin failing to do their duty. I dare say there is not a graduate of the thousand and one medical colleges of the country who is not prepared to laugh at this theory, while unable, quite likely, to produce a better—so much easier is it to pull down than to build up; but my object is merely to give the reader a general idea of my poor sister's situation.

In outward appearance, her countenance denoted that expression which the French so well describe by the customary term of "*fatigue*," rather than any other positive indication of disease — Grace's frame was so delicate by nature, that a little falling away was not as perceptible in her as it would have been in most persons, though her beautiful little hands wanted that fullness which had rendered their taper fingers and roseate tint formerly so very faultless. There must have been a good deal of fever, as her color was often higher than was formerly usual. It was this circumstance that continued to render her beauty unearthly, without its being accompanied by the emaciation so common in the latter stages of pulmonary disease, though its tendency was strongly to undermine her strength.

Grace, without rising from her pillow, now asked me for an outline of my late voyage. She heard me, I make no doubt, with real interest, for all that concerned me in a measure concerned her. Her smile was sweetness itself, as she listened to my successes; and the interest she manifested in Marble, with whose previous history she was well acquainted, was not less than I had felt myself, in hearing his own account of his adventures. All this delighted me, as it went to prove that I had beguiled the sufferer from brooding over her own sorrows; and what might not be hoped for, could we lead her back to mingle in the ordinary concerns of life, and surround her with the few friends she so tenderly loved, and whose absence, perhaps, had largely contributed to reducing her to her present state? This thought recalled Lucy to my mind, and the wish I had to ascertain how far it might be agreeable to the latter to be summoned to Clawbonny. I determined to lead the conversation to this subject.

"You have told me, Grace," I said, "that you send and receive letters weekly, to and from Lucy?"

"Each time the *Wallingford* goes and comes; and that, you know, is weekly. I suppose the reason I got no letter to-day was owing to the fact that the sloop sailed before her time. The Lord High Admiral was on board; and, like wind and tide, *he* waits for no man!"

"Bless you—bless you, dearest sister—this gayety removes a mountain from my heart!"

Grace looked pleased at first; then, as she gazed wistfully into my face, I could see her own expression change to one of melancholy concern. Large tears started from her eyes, and three or four followed each other down her cheeks. All this said, plainer than words, that, though a fond brother might be momentarily deceived, she herself foresaw the end. I bowed my head to the pillow, stifled the groans that oppressed me, and kissed the tears from her cheeks. To put an end to these distressing scenes, I determined to be more business-like in future, and suppress all feeling as much as possible.

"The Lord High Admiral," I resumed, "is a species of Turk on board ship, as honest Moses Marble will tell you, when you see him, Grace. But, now for Lucy and her letters—I dare say the last are filled with tender secrets, touching such persons as Andrew Drewett, and others of her admirers, which render it improper to show any of them to me?"

Grace looked at me, with earnestness, as if to ascertain whether I was really as unconcerned as I affected to be. Then she seemed to muse, picking the cotton of the spotless counterpane on which she was lying, like one at a loss what to say or think.

"I see how it is," I resumed, forcing a smile; "the hint has been indiscreet. A rough son of Neptune is not the proper confidant for the secrets of Miss Lucy Hardinge. Perhaps you are right; fidelity to each other being indispensable in your sex."

"It is not that, Miles. I doubt if Lucy ever wrote me a line that you might not see; in proof of which, you shall have the package of her letters, with full permission to read every one of them. It will be like reading the correspondence of another *sister*."

I fancied Grace laid an emphasis on the last word she used; and I started at its unwelcome sound—unwelcome, as applied to Lucy Hardinge, to a degree that I cannot express. I had observed that Lucy never used any of these terms, as connected with me, and it was one of the reasons why I had indulged in the folly of supposing that she was conscious of a tenderer sentiment. But Lucy was so natural, so totally free from exaggeration, so just and true in all her feelings, that one could not expect from her most of the acts of girlish weakness. As for Grace, she called Chloe, gave her the keys of her secretary, and told her to bring me the package she described.

"Go and look over them, Miles," said my sister, as I received the letters; "there must be more than twenty of them, and you can read half before the dinner hour. I will meet you at table; and let me implore you not to alarm good Mr. Hardinge. He does not believe me seriously ill; and it cannot benefit him or me to cause him pain."

I promised discretion, and hastened to my own room with the precious bundle of Lucy's letters. Shall I own the truth? I kissed the papers, fervently, before they were loosened, and it seemed to me I possessed a treasure, in holding in my hand so many of the dear girl's epistles. I commenced in the order of the date, and began to read with eagerness. It was impossible for Lucy Hardinge to write to one she loved, and not exhibit the truth and nature of her feelings. These appeared in every paragraph in which it was proper to make any allusions of the sort. But the letters had other charms. It was apparent throughout that the writer was ignorant that she wrote to an invalid, though she could not but know that she wrote to a recluse. Her aim evidently was to amuse Grace, of whose mental sufferings she could not well be ignorant. Lucy was a keen observer, and her

epistles were filled with amusing comments on the follies that were daily committed in New York, as well as in Paris or London. I was delighted with the delicate pungency of her satire, which, however, was totally removed from vulgar scandal.

There was nothing in these letters that might not have been uttered in a drawing-room, to any but the persons concerned; and yet they were filled with a humor that rose often to wit, relieved by a tact and taste that a man never could have attained. Throughout, it was apparent to me, Lucy, in order to amuse Grace, was giving full scope to a natural talent—one that far surpassed the same capacity in her brother, being as true as his was meretricious and jesuitical—which she had hitherto concealed from us all, merely because she had not seen an occasion fit for its use. Allusions in the letters, themselves, proved that Grace had commented on this unexpected display of observant humor, and had expressed her surprise at its existence. It was then as novel to my sister as it was to myself. I was struck also with the fact that Rupert's name did not appear once in all these letters. They embraced just twenty-seven weeks, between the earliest and the latest date; and there were nine-and-twenty letters, two having been sent by private conveyances; her father's, most probably, he occasionally making the journey by land; yet no one of them contained the slightest allusion to her brother, or to either of the Mertons. This was enough to let me know how well Lucy understood the reason of Grace's withdrawal to Clawbonny.

"And how is it with Miles Wallingford's name?" some of my fair readers may be ready to ask. I went carefully through the package in the course of the evening, and I set aside two, as the only exceptions in which my name did not appear. On examining these with jealous care, I found each had a postscript, one of which was to the following effect: "I see by the papers that Miles has sailed for Malta, having at last left those stubborn Turks. I am glad of this, as one would not wish to have the excellent fellow shut up in the Seven Towers, however honorable it may have been." The other postscript contained this: "Dear Miles has got to Leghorn, my father tells me, and may be expected home this summer. How great happiness this will bring you, dearest Grace, I can well understand; and I need scarcely say that no one will rejoice more to see him again than his late guardian and myself."

That the papers were often looked over to catch reports of my movements in Europe, by means of ships arriving from different parts of the world, was apparent enough; but I scarce knew what to make of the natural and simply affectionate manner in which my name was introduced. It might proceed from a wish to gratify Grace, and a desire to let the sister know all that she herself possessed touching the brother's movements. Then Andrew Drewett's name occurred very frequently, though it was generally in connection with that of his mother, who had evidently constituted herself a sort of regular *chaperone* for Lucy, more especially during the time she was kept out of the gay world by her mourning. I read several of these passages with the most scrupulous attention, in order to detect the feeling with which they had been written; but the most practiced art could not have more successfully concealed any secret of this sort, than Lucy's nature. This often proves to be the case; the just-minded and true among men daily becoming the profoundest mysteries to a vicious, cunning, deceptive, aud selfish world. An honest man, indeed, is ever a paradox to all but those who see things with his own eyes. This is the reason that improper motives are so often imputed to the simplest and seemingly most honest deeds.

The result was to write, entreating Lucy to come to Clawbonny; first taking care to secure her father's assent to aid my request. This was done in a way not to awaken any alarm, and yet with sufficient strength to render it tolerably certain she would come. On deliberate reflection, and after seeing my sister at table, where she ate nothing but a light

vegetable diet, and passing the evening with her, I thought I could not do less in justice to the invalid or her friend. I took the course with great regret on several accounts; and, among others, from a reluctance to appear to draw Lucy away from the society of my rival into my own. Yet what right had I to call myself the rival or competitor of a man who had openly professed an attachment, where I had never breathed a syllable myself that might not readily be mistaken for the language of that friendship which time and habit, and a respect for each other's qualities, so easily awaken among the young of different sexes? I had been educated almost as Lucy's brother; and why should she not feel toward me as one?

Neb went out in the boat as soon as he got his orders, and the *Wallingford* sailed again in ballast that very night. She did not remain at the wharf an hour after her wheat was out. I felt easier when these duties were discharged, and was better prepared to pass the night in peace. Grace's manner and appearance, too, contributed to this calm, for she seemed to revive, and to experience some degree of earthly happiness, in having her brother near her. When Mr. Hardinge read prayers that night, she came to the chair where I stood, took my hand in hers, and knelt at my side. I was touched to tears by this act of affection, which spoke as much of the tenderness of the sainted and departed spirit, lingering around those it had loved on earth, as of the affection of the world. I folded the dear girl to my bosom as I left her at the door of her own room that night, and went to my own pillow with a heavy heart. Seamen pray little; less than they ought, amid the rude scenes of their hazardous lives. Still, I had not quite forgotten the lessons of childhood, and sometimes I practiced on them. That night I prayed fervently, beseeching God to spare my sister, if in His wisdom it were meet; and I humbly invoked His blessings on the excellent divine, and on Lucy by name. I am not ashamed to own it, let who may deride the act.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Wherever sorrow is, relief would be;
If you do sorrow at my grief in love,
By giving love, your sorrow and my grief
Were both extermin'd."—As You Like It.

I saw but little of Grace, during the early part of the succeeding day. She had uniformly breakfasted in her own room, of late, and, in the short visit I paid her there, I found her composed, with an appearance of renewed strength that encouraged me greatly as to the future. Mr. Hardinge insisted on rendering an account of his stewardship that morning, and I let the good divine have his own way; though had he asked me for a receipt in full, I would cheerfully have given it to him, without examining a single item. There was a singular peculiarity about Mr. Hardinge. No one could live less for the world generally; no one was less qualified to superintend extensive worldly interests, that required care, or thought; and no one would have been a more unsafe executor in matters that were intricate or involved; still, in the mere business of accounts, he was as methodical and exact as the most faithful banker. Rigidly honest, and with a strict regard for the rights of others, living moreover on a mere pittance, for the greater part of his life, this conscientious divine never contracted a debt he could not pay.

What rendered this caution more worthy of remark was the fact that he had a spendthrift son; but even Rupert could never lure him into any weakness of this sort. I question if his actual cash receipts, independently of the profits of his little glebe, exceeded $300 in any one year; yet he and his children were ever well dressed, and I knew from observation that his table was always sufficiently supplied. He got a few presents occasionally, from his parishioners, it is true; but they did not amount to any sum of moment.. It was method and a determination not to anticipate his income, that placed him so much above the world, while he had a family to support; whereas, now that Mrs. Bradfort's fortune was in the possession of

his children, he assured me he felt himself quite rich, though he scrupulously refused to appropriate one dollar of the handsome income that passed through his hands as executor to his own uses. It was all Lucy's, who was entitled to receive this income even in her minority, and to her he paid every cent, quarterly; the sister providing for Rupert's ample wants.

Of course I found everything exact to a farthing; the necessary papers were signed, the power of attorney was canceled, and I entered fully into the possession of my own. An unexpected rise in the value of flour had raised my shore receipts that year to the handsome sum of nine thousand dollars. This was not properly income, however, but profits principally obtained through the labor of the mill. By putting all my loose cash together, I found I could command fully thirty thousand dollars, in addition to the price of the ship. This sum was making me a man quite at my ease, and, properly managed, it opened a way to wealth. How gladly would I have given every cent of it to see Grace as healthy and happy as she was when I left her at Mrs. Bradfort's, to sail in the *Crisis!*

After settling the figures, Mr. Hardinge and I mounted our horses, and rode over the property to take a look at the state of the farm. Our road took us near the little rectory and the glebe; and here the simple-minded divine broke out into ecstasies on the subject of the beauties of his own residence, and the delight with which he should now return to his ancient abode. He loved Clawbonny no less than formerly, but he loved the rectory more.

"I was born in that humble, snug, quiet old stone-cottage, Miles," he said, "and there I lived for years a happy husband and father, and I hope I may say a faithful shepherd of my little flock. St. Michael's, Clawbonny, is not Trinity, New York, but it may prove, on a small scale, as to numbers, as fitting a nursery of saints. What humble and devout Christians have I known to kneel at its little altar, Miles, among whom your mother, and your venerable old grandmother, were two of the best. I hope the day is not distant when I shall meet there another Mrs. Miles Wallingford. Marry young, my boy; early marriages prove happier than late, where there are the means of subsistence."

"You would not have me marry until I can find a woman whom I shall truly love, dear sir?"

"Heaven forbid! I would rather see you a bachelor to my dying day. But America has enough females that a youth, like you, could, and indeed ought to love. I could direct you to fifty myself."

"Well, sir, *your* recommendation would have great weight with me. I wish you would begin."

"That I will, that I will, if you wish it, my dear boy. Well, there is a Miss Hervey, Miss Kate Hervey, in town; a girl of excellent qualities, and who would just suit you, could you agree."

"I recollect the young lady; the greatest objection I should raise to her is a want of personal attractions. Of all Mrs. Bradfort's acquaintances, I think she was among the very plainest."

"What is beauty, Miles? In marriage very different recommendations are to be looked for by the husband."

"Yet, I have understood you practiced on another theory; Mrs. Hardinge, even as I recollect her, was very handsome."

"Yes, that is true," answered the good divine, simply; "she was so; but beauty is not to be considered as an *objection.* If you do not relish the idea of Kate Hervey, what do you say to Jane Harwood—there is a pretty girl for you."

"A pretty girl, sir, but not for me. But, in naming so many young ladies, why do you overlook your own daughter?"

I said this with a sort of desperate resolution, tempted by the opportunity, and the direction the discourse had taken. When it was uttered, I repented of my temerity, and almost trembled to hear the answer.

"Lucy!" exclaimed Mr. Hardinge, turning suddenly toward me, and looking so intently and earnestly in my face,

that I saw the possibility of such a thing then struck him for the first time. "Sure enough, why should you not marry Lucy? There is not a particle of relationship between you, after all, though I have so long considered you as brother and sister. I wish we had thought of this earlier, Miles; it would be a most capital connection—though I should insist on your quitting the sea. Lucy has too affectionate a heart to be always in distress for an absent husband. I wonder the possibility of this thing did not strike me, before it was too late; in a man so much accustomed to see what is going on around me, to overlook this!"

The words "too late" sounded to me like the doom of fate; and had my simple-minded companion but the tithe of the observation which he so much vaunted, he must have seen my agitation. I had advanced so far, however, that I determined to learn the worst, whatever pain it might cost me.

"I suppose, sir, the very circumstance that we were brought up together has prevented us all from regarding the thing as possible. But why 'too late,' my excellent guardian, if we who are the most interested in the thing should happen to think otherwise?"

"Certainly not too late, if you include Lucy herself, in your conditions; but I am afraid, Miles, it is 'too late' for Lucy."

"Am I to understand, then, that Miss Hardinge is engaged to Mr. Drewett? Are her affections enlisted in his behalf?"

"You may be certain of one thing, boy, and that is, if Lucy be engaged, her affections are enlisted—so conscientious a young woman would never marry without giving her heart with her hand. As for the fact, however, I know nothing, except by inference. I do suppose a mutual attachment to exist between her and Andrew Drewett."

"Of course, with good reason, sir. Lucy is not a coquette, or a girl to encourage when she does not mean to accept."

"That's all I know of the matter. Drewett continues to visit; is as attentive as a young man well can be, where a young woman is as scrupulous as is Lucy about the proper forms, and I infer they understand each other. I have thought of speaking to Lucy on the subject, but I do notwish to influence her judgment in a case where there exists no objection. Drewett is every way a suitable match, and I wish things to take their own course. There is one little circumstance, however, that I can mention to you as a sort of son, Miles, and which I consider conclusive as to the girl's inclinations—I have remarked that she refuses all expedients to get her to be alone with Drewett, refuses to make excursions in which she must be driven in his curricle, or to go anywhere with him, even to the next door. So particular is she, that she contrives never to be alone with him, even in his many visits to the house."

"And do you consider that as a proof of attachment?—of her being engaged? Does your own experience, sir, confirm such a notion?"

"What else can it be, if it be not a consciousness of a passion—of an attachment that she is afraid every one will see? You do not understand the sex, I perceive, Miles, or the fineness of their natures would be more apparent to you. As for my experience, no conclusion can be drawn from that, as I and my dear wife were thrown together very young, all alone, in her mother's country-house, and the old lady being bed-ridden, there was no opportunity for the bashful maiden to betray this consciousness. But, if I understand human nature, such is the secret of Lucy's feelings toward Andrew Drewett. It is of no great moment to you, Miles, notwithstanding, as there are plenty more young women to be had in the world."

"True, sir; but there is only one Lucy Hardinge!" I rejoined, with a fervor and strength of utterance that betrayed more than I intended.

My late guardian actually stopped his horse this time, to look at me, and I could perceive deep concern gathering around his usually serene and placid brow. He began to penetrate my feelings, and I believe they caused him real grief.

"I never could have dreamed of this!" Mr. Hardinge at length exclaimed. "Do you really love Lucy, my dear Miles?"

"Better than I do my own life, sir—I almost worship the earth she treads on—love her with my whole heart, and have loved, I believe, if the truth were known, ever since I was sixteen—perhaps I had better say, twelve years old."

The truth escaped me, as the torrent of the Mississippi breaks through the levée, and the passage once open for its exit, it cleared a way for itself, until the current of my feelings left no doubt of its direction. I believe I was a little ashamed of my own weakness, for I caused my horse to walk forward, Mr. Hardinge accompanying the movement, for a considerable distance, in a profound, and I doubt not, a painful silence.

"This has taken me altogether by surprise, Miles," my late guardian resumed; "altogether by surprise. What would I not give could this have been known a year or two since! My dear boy, I feel for you, from the bottom of my heart, for I can understand what it must be to love a girl like Lucy, without hope. Why did you not let this be known sooner—or, why did you insist on going to sea, having so strong a motive for remaining at home?"

"I was too young, at that time, sir, to act on, or even to understand my own feelings. On my return, in the *Crisis*, I found Lucy in a set superior to that in which I was born and educated, and it would have been a poor proof of my attachment to wish to bring her down nearer to my own level."

"I understand you, Miles, and can appreciate the generosity of your conduct; though I am afraid it would have been too late on your return in the *Crisis*. That was only a twelvemonth since, and then, I rather think, Andrew Drewett had offered. There is good sense in your feeling on the subject of marriages in unequal conditions in life, for they certainly lead to many heart-burnings, and greatly lessen the chances of happiness. One thing is certain; in all such cases, if the inferior cannot rise to the height of the superior, the superior must sink to the level of the inferior. Man and wife cannot continue to occupy different social positions; and as for the nonsense that is uttered on such subjects, by visionaries, under the claim of its being common sense, it is only fit for pretending theories, and can have nothing to do with the great rules of practice. You were right in principle, then, Miles, though you have greatly exaggerated the facts of your own particular case."

"I have always known, sir, and have ever been ready to admit that the Hardinges have belonged to a different class of society from that filled by the Wallingfords."

"This is true, but in part only; and by no means true to a degree that need have drawn any impassable line between you and Lucy. You forget how poor we then were, and how substantial a benefit the care of Clawbonny might have been to my dear girl. Besides, you are of reputable descent and position, if not precisely of the gentry; and this is not a country, or an age, to carry notions of such a nature beyond the strict bounds of reason. You and Lucy were educated on the same level; and, after all, that is the great essential for the marriage connection."

There was great good sense in what Mr. Hardinge said; and I began to see that pride, and not humility, might have interfered with my happiness. As I firmly believed it was now too late, however, I began to wish the subject changed; for I felt it grating on some of my most sacred feelings. With a view to divert the conversation to another channel, therefore, I remarked with some emphasis, affecting an indifference I did not feel:

"What cannot be cured must be endured, sir; and I shall endeavor to find a sailor's happiness hereafter in loving my ship. Besides, were Andrew Drewett entirely out of the question, it is now 'too late,' in another sense, since it would never do for the man who, himself at his ease in the way of money, hesitated about offering when his mistress was poor, to prove his love by proposing to Mrs. Bradfort's heiress. Still, I own to so much weakness as to wish to know, before we

close the subject forever, why Mr. Drewett and your daughter do not marry, if they are engaged? Perhaps it is owing only to Lucy's mourning?"

"I have myself imputed it to another cause. Rupert is entirely dependent on his sister, and I know Lucy so well as to feel certain — some extraordinary cause not interposing—that she wishes to bestow half her cousin's fortune on her brother. This cannot be done until she is of age, and she wants near two years of attaining her majority."

I made no answer; for I felt how likely this was to be true. Lucy was not a girl of professions, and she would be very apt to keep a resolution of this nature a secret in her own breast until ready to carry it into execution. No more passed between Mr. Hardinge and myself on the subject of our recent conversation; though I could see my avowal had made him sad, and that it induced him to treat me with more affection, even, than had been his practice. Once or twice, in the course of the next day or two, I overheard him soliloquizing—a habit to which he was a good deal addicted — during which he would murmur, "What a pity!"—"How much to be regretted!" — "I would rather have him for a son than any man on earth!" and other similar expressions. Of course these involuntary disclosures did not weaken my regard for my late guardian.

About noon the *Grace and Lucy* came in, and Neb reported that Dr. Bard was not at home. He had left my letter, however, and it would be delivered as soon as possible. He told me also that the wind had been favorable on the river, and that the *Wallingford* must reach town that day.

Nothing further occurred, worthy of notice. I passed the afternoon with Grace, in the little room; and we conversed much of the past, of our parents in particular, without adverting, however, to her situation, any further than to apprise her of what I had done. I thought she was not sorry to learn I had sent for Lucy, now that I was with her, and it was no longer possible her illness could be concealed. As for the physicians, when they were mentioned, I could see a look of tender concern in Grace's eyes, as if she regretted that I still clung to the delusion of hoping to see her health restored. Notwithstanding these little drawbacks, we passed a sweet eventide together. For more than an hour Grace lay on my bosom, occasionally patting her hand on my cheeks, as the child caresses its mother. This was an old habit of hers, and it was one I was equally delighted and pained to have her resume now; we were of the age and stature of man and woman.

The next day was Sunday, and Grace insisted on my driving her to church. This was done, accordingly, in a very old-fashioned, but very easy Boston chaise, that had belonged to my mother, and with very careful driving. The congregation, like the church edifice of St. Michael's, was very small, being confined, with some twenty or thirty exceptions, to the family and dependents of Clawbonny. Mr. Hardinge's little flock was hedged in by other denominations on every side, and it was not an easy matter to break through the barriers that surrounded it. Then he was not possessed with the spirit of proselytism, contenting himself with aiding in the spiritual advancement of those whom Providence had consigned to his care. On the present occasion, however, the little building was full, and that was as much as could have happened had it been as large as St. Peter's itself. The prayers were devoutly and fervently read, and the sermon was plain and filled with piety.

My sister professed herself in no manner wearied with the exertion. We dined with Mr. Hardinge, at the rectory, which was quite near the church; and the irreverent, business-like, make-weight sort of look of going into one service almost as soon as the other was ended, as if to score off so much preaching and praying as available at the least trouble, being avoided, by having the evening service commence late, she was enabled to remain until the close of the day. Mr. Hardinge rarely preached but once of a

Sunday. He considered the worship of God and the offices of the church as the proper duties of the day, and regarded his own wisdom as a matter of secondary importance. But one sermon cost him as much labor, and study, and anxiety as most clergymen's two. His preaching, also, had the high qualification of being addressed to the affections of his flock, and not to its fears and interests. He constantly reminded us of God's *love*, and of the *beauty* of holiness; while I do not remember to have heard him allude half a dozen times in his life to the terrors of judgment and punishment, except as they were connected with that disappointed love. I suppose there are spirits that require these allusions, and the temptations of future happiness, to incite their feelings; but I like the preacher who is a Christian because he feels himself *drawn* to holiness, by a power that is of itself holy; and not those who appeal to their people, as if heaven and hell were a mere matter of preference and avoidance, on the ground of expediency. I cannot better characterize Mr. Hardinge's preaching, than by saying that I do not remember ever to have left his church with a sense of fear toward the Creator; though I have often been impressed with a love that was as profound as the adoration that had been awakened.

Another calm and comparatively happy evening was passed, during which I conversed freely with Grace of my own intentions, endeavoring to revive in her an interest in life, by renewing old impressions, and making her participate in my feelings. Had I been with her from the hour spring opened, with its renewal of vegetation, and all the joys it confers on the innocent and happy, I have often thought since, I might have succeeded. As it was, she listened with attention, and apparently with pleasure, for she saw it served to relieve my mind. We did not separate until I insisted Grace should retire, and Chloe had made more than one remonstrance about her young mistress's exceeding the usual time. On leaving my sister's chamber, the negress followed me with a light, lest I should fall, among the intricate turnings, and the ups and downs of the old building.

"Well, Chloe," I said, as we proceeded together, "how do you find Neb? Does he improve by this running about on the ocean — especially do you think he is tanned?"

"De *fel*-ler!"

"Yes, he is a fellow, sure enough, and let me tell you, Chloe, a very capital fellow, too. If it can be of any advantage to him in your favor to know the truth, I will just say, a more useful seaman does not sail the ocean than Neb, and that I consider him of as much importance as the mainmast."

"What be *dat*, Masser Mile?"

"I see nothing, Chloe—there are no spooks at Clawbonny, you know."

"No, sah! What b'e t'ing Neb like, de *fel*-ler?"

"Oh! I ask your pardon—the mainmast, you mean. It is the most important spar in the ship, and I meant that Neb was as useful as that mast. In battle, too, Neb is as brave as a lion."

Here Chloe could stand it no longer; she fairly laughed outright, in pure, natural admiration of her suitor's qualities. When this was performed she ejaculated once more, "De *feller!*" dropped a courtesy, said "Good night, Masser Mile," and left me at my own door. Alas! alas! among the improvements of this age, we have entirely lost the breed of the careless, good-natured, affectionate, faithful, hard-working, and yet happy blacks, of whom more or less were to be found in every respectable and long-established family of the State forty years ago.

The next day was one of great anxiety to me. I rose early, and the first thing was to ascertain the direction of the wind. In midsummer this was apt to be southerly, and so it proved on that occasion. Neb was sent to the point as a lookout; he returned about ten, and reported a fleet of sloops in sight. These vessels were still a long distance down the river, but they were advancing at a tolerable rate. Whether the *Wallingford* was among them or not was more than

could yet be told. I sent him back to his station as soon as he had eaten; and unable to remain quiet in the house myself, I mounted my horse and rode out into the fields. Here, as usual, I experienced the happiness of looking at objects my ancestors loved to regard, and which always have had a strong and near interest with me.

Perhaps no country that ever yet existed has been so little understood, or so much misrepresented, as this America of ours. It is as little understood, I was on the point of saying, at home as it is abroad, and almost as much misrepresented. Certainly its possessors are a good deal addicted to valuing themselves on distinctive advantages that, in reality, they do not enjoy, while their enemies declaim about vices and evils from which they are comparatively free. Facts are made to suit theories, and thus it is that we see well-intentioned, and otherwise respectable writers, constantly running into extravagances, in order to adapt the circumstances to the supposed logical or moral inference. This reasoning backward has caused Alison, with all his knowledge and far-mindedness, to fall into several egregious errors, as I have discovered while recently reading his great work on Europe. He says we are a migratory race, and that we do not love the sticks and stones that surround us, but quit the paternal roof without regret, and consider the play-grounds of infancy as only so much land for the market. He also hazards the assertion, that there is not such a thing as a literal farmer—that is, a tenant who *farms* his land from a landlord—in all America. Now, as a rule, and comparing the habits of America with those of older countries, in which land is not so abundant, this may be true; but as a literal fact, nothing can be less. Four-fifths of the inhabited portion of the American territory has a civilized existence of half a century's duration; and there has not been time to create the long-lived attachments named, more especially in the regions that are undergoing the moral fusion that is always an attendant of a new settlement.

That thousands of heartless speculators exist among us who do regard everything, even to the graves of their fathers, as only so much improvable property, is as undeniable as the fact that they are odious to all men of any moral feeling; but thousands and tens of thousands are to be found in the country, who *do* reverence their family possessions from a sentiment that is creditable to human nature. I will not mention Clawbonny, and its history, lest I might be suspected of being partial; but it would be easy for me to point out a hundred families, embracing all classes, from the great proprietor to the plain yeoman, who own and reside on the estates of those who first received them from the hand of Nature, and this after one or two centuries of possession. What will Mr. Alison say, for instance, of the Manor of Rensselaer? A manor, in the legal sense, it is no longer, certainly, the new institutions destroying all the feudal tenures; but, as mere property, the late patron transmitted it as regularly to his posterity as any estate was ever transmitted in Europe. This extensive manor lies in the heart of New York, a state about as large and about as populous as Scotland, and it embraces no less than three cities in its bosom, though their sites are not included in its ownership, having been exempted by earlier grants. It is of more than two centuries' existence, and it extends eight-and-forty miles east and west, and half that distance north and south. Nearly all this vast property, is held, at this hour, of the Van Rensselaers, as landlords, and is farmed by their tenants, there being several thousands of the latter. The same is true, on a smaller scale, of the Livingston, the Van Cortlandt, the Philipse, the Nicoll, and various other old New York estates, though several were lost by attainder in the Revolution. I explain these things, lest any European who may happen to read this book should regard it as fiction; for, allowing for trifling differences, a hundred Clawbonnys are to be found on the two banks of the Hudson at this very hour.*

* Even the American may learn the following facts with some surprise. It is now about five-and-

But to return to the narrative.

My curiosity increased so much as the day advanced that I rode toward the point to look for the sloop. There she was, sure enough, and there was Neb, too, galloping a young horse, bare-back, to the house with the news. I met him with an order to proceed to the wharf with the chaise, while I dashed on in the same direction myself, almost devoured with an impatience to learn the success of my different missions as I galloped along. I could see the upper part of the *Wallingford's* sails gliding through the leaves that fringed the bank, and it was apparent that she and I would reach the wharf almost at the same instant. Notwithstanding all my anxiety, it was impossible to get a glimpse of the vessel's deck.

I did not quit the saddle until the planks of the wharf were under the horse's hoofs. Then I got a view of the sloop's decks for the first time. A respectable looking, tall, slender, middle-aged man, with a bright dark eye, was on the quarter-deck, and I bowed to him, inferring at once that he was one of the medical gentlemen to whom I had sent the message. In effect it was Post, the second named on my list, the first not being able to come. He returned my bow, but before I could alight and go on board to receive him, Marble's head rose from the cabin, and my mate sprung ashore and shook me cordially by the hand.

"Here I am, Miles, my boy," cried Marble, whom, off duty, I had earnestly begged to treat me with his old freedom, and who took me at my word—"Here I am, Miles, my boy, and further from salt water than I have been in five-and-twenty years. So this is the famous Clawbonny! I cannot say much for the port, which is somewhat crowded while it contains but one craft, though the river outside is pretty well, as rivers go. D'ye know, lad, that I've been in a fever all the way up lest we should get ashore, on one side or the other? your having land on both tacks at once is too much of a good thing. This coming up to Clawbonny has put me in mind of running them straits, though we *have* had rather better weather this passage, and a clear horizon. What d'ye call that affair up against the hillside yonder, with the jig-a-merree that is turning in the water?"

"That is a mill, my friend, and the jig-a-merree is the very wheel on which you have heard me say my father was crushed."

Marble looked sorrowfully at the wheel, squeezed my hand, as if to express sorrow for having reminded me of so painful an event, and then I heard him murmuring to himself—"Well, I never had a father to lose. No bloody mill *could* do me *that* injury."

"That gentleman on the quarter-deck," I remarked, "is a physician for whom I sent to town, I suppose."

"Ay, ay, he's some such matter, I do suppose, though I've been generalizing so much about this here river, and the manner of sailing a craft of that rig, I've had little to say to him. I'm always a better friend to the cook than to the surgeon. But, Miles, my lad, there's a rare 'un in the ship's after-cabin, I can tell you!"

"That must be Lucy!" and I did not stop to pay my compliments to the strange gentleman, but almost leaped into the vessel's cabin.

There was Lucy, sure enough, attended by a respectable-looking elderly black female, one of the half dozen slaves that had become hers by the death of Mrs. Bradfort. Neither spoke, but we shook hands with frankness, and I understood by the

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twenty years since the writer, as tenant by the courtesy, came into possession of two farms, lying within twenty-three miles of New York, in each of which there had been three generations of tenants, and as many of landlords, *without a scrap of a pen having passed between the parties*, so far as the writer could ever discover, receipts for rent excepted! He also stands in nearly the same relation to another farm, in the same county, on which a lease for ninety years is at this moment running, one of the covenants of which prescribes that the tenant shall "frequent divine service *according to the Church of England*, when opportunity offers." What an evidence of the nature of the tyranny from which our ancestors escaped, more especially when it is seen that the tenant was obliged to submit to this severe exaction, in consideration of a rent that is merely nominal!

anxious expression of my companion's eye all she wished to know.

"I really think she seems better, and certainly she is far more cheerful, within this last day or two," I answered to the appeal. "Yesterday she was twice at church, and this morning, for a novelty, she breakfasted with me."

"God be praised!" Lucy exclaimed, with fervor. Then she sat down and relieved her feelings in tears. I told her to expect me again, in a few minutes, and joined the physician, who, by this time, was apprised of my presence. The calm, considerate manner of Post gave me a confidence I had not felt for some days; and I really began to hope it might be still within the power of his art to save the sister I so dearly loved.

Our dispositions for quitting the sloop were soon made, and we ascended the hill together, Lucy leaning on my arm. On its summit was the chaise, into which the doctor and Marble were persuaded to enter, Lucy preferring to walk. The negress was to proceed in the vehicle that had been sent for the luggage, and Lucy and I set out, arm in arm, to walk rather more than a mile in company, and that, too, without the presence of a third person. Such an occurrence, under any other circumstances than those in which we were both placed, would have made me one of the happiest men on earth; but, in the actual situation in which I found myself, it rendered me silent and uncomfortable. Not so with Lucy; ever natural, and keeping truth incessantly before her eyes, the dear girl took my arm without the least embarrassment, and showed no sign of impatience or of doubt. She was sad, but full of gentle confidence in her own sincerity and motives.

"This is dear Clawbonny again!" she exclaimed, after we had walked in silence a short distance. "How beautiful are the fields, how fresh the woods, how sweet the flowers. Oh! Miles, a day in such a spot as this is worth a year in town!"

"Why then do you, who have now so much at your command, pass more than half your time between the heated bricks of Wall Street, when you know how happy we should all be to see you here, among us again!"

"I have not been certain of this; that has been the sole reason of my absence. Had I known I should be welcome, nothing would have induced me to suffer Grace to pass the last six sad, sad months by herself."

"Known that you should be welcome! Surely you have not supposed, Lucy, that *I* can ever regard you as anything but welcome here."

"I had no allusion to *you*—thought not of you, Miles, at all," answered Lucy, with the quiet manner of one who felt she was thinking, acting, and speaking no more than what was perfectly right; "my mind was dwelling altogether on Grace."

"Is it possible you could doubt of Grace's willingness to see you at all times and in all places, Lucy?"

"I have doubted it; have thought I was acting prudently and well in staying away just at this time, though I now begin to fear the decision has been hasty and unwise."

"May I ask *why* Lucy Hardinge has come to so singular and violent an opinion, as connected with her bosom friend, and almost sister, Grace Wallingford?"

"That *almost sister!* Oh! Miles, what is there I possess which I would not give that there might be perfect confidence again between you and me on this subject; such confidence as existed when we were boy and girl—children I might say."

"And what prevents it? Certain I am, the alienation does not, cannot come from me. You have only to speak, Lucy, to have an attentive listener; to ask to receive the truest answers. What can, then, prevent the confidence you wish?"

"There is *one* obstacle; surely, Miles, you can readily imagine what I mean?"

"Can it be possible Lucy is alluding to Andrew Drewett?" I thought to myself. "Has she discovered my attachment, and does she, will she, *can* she regret her own engagement?" A lover who thought thus would not be apt to leave the question long in doubt.

"Deal plainly with me, I implore of you, Lucy," I said, solemnly. "One

word uttered with your old sincerity and frankness may close a chasm that has now been widening between us for the last year or two. What is the obstacle you mean?"

"I have seen and felt the alienation to which you allude quite as sensibly as you can have done yourself, Miles," the dear girl answered, in her natural, simple manner; "and I will trust all to your generosity. Need I say more, to explain what I mean, than mention the name of Rupert?"

"What of him, Lucy?—be explicit; vague allusions may be worse than nothing."

Lucy's little hand was on my arm, and she had drawn its glove on account of the heat. I felt it press me almost convulsively, as she added: "I do, I *must* think you have too much affection and gratitude for my dear father, too much regard for me, ever to forget that you and Rupert once lived together as brothers?"

"Grace has my promise already on that subject. I shall never take the world's course with Rupert, in this affair."

I heard Lucy's involuntary sob, as if she gasped for breath; and, turning, I saw her sweet eyes bent on my face with an expression of thankfulness that could not be mistaken.

"I would have given the same pledge to you, Lucy, and purely on your own account. It would be too much to cause you to mourn for your brother's——"

I did not name the offense lest my feelings should tempt me to use too strong a term.

"This is all I ask—all I desire, Miles, bless you—bless you! for having so freely given me this assurance. Now my heart is relieved from this burden, I am ready to speak frankly to you; still, had I seen Grace——"

"Have no scruples on account of your regard for womanly feeling—I know everything, and shall not attempt to conceal from you, that disappointed love for Rupert has brought my sister to the state she is in. This might not have happened had either of us been with her; but, buried as she has been alone in this place, her wounded sensibilities have proved too strong for a frame that is so delicate."

There was a pause for a minute after I ended.

"I have long feared that some such calamity would befall us," Lucy answered in a low, measured tone. "I think you do not understand Grace as well as I do, Miles. Her mind and feelings have a stronger influence than common over her body; and I fear no society of ours, or of others could have saved her this trial. Still, we must not despair. It is a trial—that is just the word; and by means of tenderness, the most sedulous care, good advice, and all that we two can do to aid, there must yet be hope. Now there is a skillful physician here, he must be dealt fairly by, and should know the whole."

"I intended to consult you on this subject—one has such a reluctance to expose Grace's most sacred feelings!"

"Surely it need not go quite as far as that," returned Lucy, with sensitive quickness; "something—*much*—must be left to conjecture; but Dr. Post must know that the mind is at the bottom of the evil; though I fear that young ladies can seldom admit the existence of such a complaint, without having it attributed to a weakness of this nature."

"That proceeds from the certainty that your sex has so much heart, Lucy; your very existence being bound up in others."

"Grace is one of peculiar strength of affections—but, Miles, we will talk no further of this at present. I scarce know how to speak of my brother's affairs, and you must give me time to reflect. Now we are at Clawbonny again, we cannot long continue strangers to each other."

This was said so sweetly, I could have knelt and kissed her shoe-ties; and yet so simply, as not to induce misinterpretation. It served to change the discourse, however, and the remainder of the way we talked of the past. Lucy spoke of her cousin's death, relating various little incidents to show how much Mrs. Bradfort was attached to her, and how good a woman she was; but not a syllable was said of the will. I was required, in my

turn, to finish the narrative of my last voyage, which had not been completed at the theater. When Lucy learned that the rough seaman who had come in the sloop was Marble, she manifested great interest in him, declaring, had she known it during the passage, that she would have introduced herself. All this time, Rupert's name was not mentioned between us; and I reached the house, feeling that something like the interest I had formerly possessed there, had been awakened in the bosom of my companion. She was, at least, firmly and confidingly my friend.

Chloe met Lucy at the door with a message—Miss Grace wanted to see Miss Lucy, alone. I dreaded this interview, and looked forward to being present at it; but Lucy begged me to confide in her, and I felt bound to comply. While the dear girl was gone to my sister's room, I sought the physician, with whom I had a brief, but explicit, conference. I told this gentleman how much Grace had been alone, permitting sorrow to wear upon her frame, and gave him to understand that the seat of my sister's malady was mental suffering. Post was a cool, discriminating man, and he ventured no remark until he had seen his patient; though I could perceive, by the keen manner in which his piercing eye was fixed on mine, that all I said was fully noted.

It was more than an hour before Lucy reappeared. It was obvious at a glance that she had been dreadfully agitated, and cruelly surprised at the condition in which she had found Grace. It was not that disease, in any of its known forms, was so very apparent; but that my sister resembled already a being of another world, in the beaming of her countenance—in the bright, unearthly expression of her eyes—and in the slightness and delicacy of the hold she seemed, generally, to have on life. Grace had always something of this about her—*much*, I might better have said; but it now appeared to be left nearly alone, as her thoughts and strength gradually receded from the means of existence.

The physician returned with Lucy to my sister's room, where he passed more than an hour; as long a time, indeed, he afterward told me himself, as he thought, could be done without fatiguing his patient. The advice he gave me was cautious and discreet. Certain tonics were prescribed; we were told to endeavor to divert the mind of our precious charge from her sources of uneasiness, by gentle means and prudent expedients. Change of scene was advised also, could it be done without producing too much fatigue. I suggested the *Wallingford*, as soon as this project was mentioned. She was a small sloop, it is true, but had two very comfortable cabins; my father having had one of them constructed especially in reference to my mother's occasional visits to town. The vessel did little, at that season of the year, besides transporting flour to market, and bringing back wheat. In the autumn she carried wood, and the products of the neighborbood. A holiday might be granted her, and no harm come of it. Dr. Post approved the idea, saying frankly there was no objection but the expense; if I could bear that, a better plan could not possibly be adopted.

That night we discussed the matter in the family circle, Mr. Hardinge having come from the rectory to join us. Everybody approved of the scheme, it was so much better than leaving Grace to pine away by herself in the solitude of Clawbonny.

"I have a patient at the Springs," said Dr. Post, "who is very anxious to see me; and, to own the truth, I am a little desirous of drinking the waters myself for a week. Carry me to Albany, and land me; after which you can descend the river, and continue your voyage to as many places, and for as long a time, as the strength of Miss Wallingford, and your own inclinations, shall dictate."

This project seemed excellent in all our eyes; even Grace heard it with a smile, placing herself entirely in our hands. It was decided to put it in practice.

CHAPTER XXX.

"And she sits and gazes at me,
With those deep and tender eyes,
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,
Looking downward from the skies."
—LONGFELLOW.

THE next morning I set about the measures necessary for carrying out our plan. Marble was invited to be of the party, the arrangements concerning the ship allowing of his absence for a few days. Once engaged, he was of infinite service, entering into the plan as my mate. The regular skipper was glad to have a furlough, and I retained on board no one of the proper crew but the river-pilot—a man who could not be dispensed with. By this arrangement we cleared the cabin from company that was not desirable for the circumstances. Neb, and three of the Clawbonny blacks, were delighted to go on such an excursion, and all were more or less familiar with the little duty that would be required of them. Indeed, Marble, Neb, and myself, were everyway able to take care of the vessel. But we chose to have plenty of physical force; and a cook was indispensable. Clawbonny supplied the latter, in the person of old Dido of that ilk.

By noon the whole party were ready to embark. Grace was driven to the wharf, and she walked on board the sloop, supported by Lucy and myself; more, however, from solicitude than from absolute necessity. Every precaution, however, was taken by order of the physician to prevent anything like excitement; the blacks, in particular, who would have followed "Miss Grace" to the water's edge, being ordered to remain at home. Chloe, to her manifest satisfaction, was permitted to accompany her "young mistress," and great was her delight. How often that day did the exclamation of "de feller" escape her, as she witnessed Neb's exploits in different parts of the sloop. It was some little time before I could account for the black's superfluous activity, imputing it to zeal in my sister's service; but, in the end, I discovered Grace had to share the glory with Chloe.

No sooner was everybody on board than we cast off. The jib was soon up; and under this short sail we moved slowly out of the creek, with a pleasant southerly breeze. As we passed the point, there stood the whole household arrayed in a line, from the tottering gray-headed and muddy-looking negro of seventy, down to the glistening, jet-black toddling things of two and three. The distance was so small, it was easy to trace even the expressions of the different countenances, which varied according to the experience, forebodings, and characters of the different individuals. Notwithstanding the sort of reverential attachment all felt for "Miss Grace," and the uncertainty some among these unsophisticated creatures must have experienced on the subject of her health, it was not in nature for such a cluster of "niggers" to exhibit unhappiness at a moment when there were so many grounds of excitement. The people of this race know nothing of the *word*, perhaps; but they delight in the *thing* quite as much as if they did nothing but electioneer all their lives. Most pliant instruments would their untutored feelings make in the hands of your demagogue; and, possibly, it may have some little influence on the white American to understand how strong is his resemblance to the "nigger," when he gives himself up to the mastery of this much approved mental power. The day was glorious; a brighter sun never shining in Italy, or on the Grecian islands; the air balmy, the vessel was gay to the eyes, having been painted about a month before, and every one seemed bent on a holiday; circumstances sufficient in themselves to make this light-hearted race smiling and happy. As the sloop went slowly past, the whole line doffed their hats, or courtesied, showing at the same time a row of ivory that shone like so many gay windows in their sable faces. I could see that Grace was touched by this manifestation of interest; such a field-day in the Clawbonny corps not having occurred since the first time my mother went to town, after the death of my father. Fortunately, everything else was soothing to my sister's spirits; and, so long as she could sit on the deck,

holding Lucy's hand, and enjoy the changing landscape, with her brother within call, it was not possible she should be altogether without happiness.

Rounding the point as we entered the river, the *Wallingford* eased-off sheet, set a studding-sail and flying-topsail and began to breast the Hudson, on her way toward its sources.

In 1803, the celebrated river we were navigating, though it had all the natural features it possesses to-day, was by no means the same picture of moving life. The steamboat did not appear on its surface until four years later; and the journeys up and down its waters were frequently a week in length. In that day, the passenger did not hurry on board, just as a bell was disturbing the neighborhood, hustling his way through a rude throng of porters, cartmen, orange-women, and newsboys, to save his distance, by just a minute and a half, but his luggage was often sent to the vessel the day before; he passed his morning in saying adieu, and when he repaired to the vessel it was with gentleman-like leisure, often to pass hours on board previously to sailing, and not unfrequently to hear the unwelcome tidings that this event was deferred until the next day. How different, too, was the passage from one in a steamboat! There was no jostling of each other, no scrambling for places at table, no bolting of food, no impertinence manifested, no swearing about missing the eastern or southern boats, or Schenectady, or Saratoga, or Boston trains, on account of a screw being loose, nor any other unseemly manifestation that anybody was in a hurry. On the contrary, wine and fruit were provided, as if the travelers intended to enjoy themselves; and a journey in that day was a *festa*. No more embarked than could be accommodated; and the company being selected, the cabin was taken to the exclusion of all unwelcome intruders. Now, the man who should order a bottle of wine to be placed at the side of his plate, would be stared at as a fool; and not without reason altogether, for, did it escape the claws of his *convives* and the waiters, he would probably reach the end of his journey before he could drink it.

In 1803, not only did the dinner pass in peace, and with gentleman-like deliberation; not only were the cooler and the fruit taken on deck, and the one sipped and the other eaten at leisure in the course of an afternoon, but in the course of many afternoons. Passages were certainly made in twenty-four hours in the sloops; but these were the exceptions, a week being much more likely to be the time passed in the enjoyment of the beautiful scenery of the river. The vessel usually got aground, once at least, and frequently several times in a trip; and often a day or two were thus delightfully lost, giving the stranger an opportunity of visiting the surrounding country. The necessity of anchoring, with a foul wind, on every opposing tide, too, increased these occasions, thus lending to the excursion something of the character of an exploring expedition. No—no—a man would learn more in one passage, up or down the Hudson, forty years since, than can be obtained by a dozen at the present time. I have a true seaman's dislike for a steamboat, and sometimes wish they were struck out of existence; though I know it is contrary to all the principles of political economy, and opposed to what is called the march of improvement. Of one thing, however, I feel quite certain: that these inventions, coupled with the gregarious manner of living that has sprung up in the large taverns, is, as one of our writers expresses it, "doing *wonders* for the manners of the people;" though, in my view of the matter, the wonder is that they have any left.

There might have been thirty sail in sight, when the *Wallingford* got fairly into the river, some turning down on a young ebb, making their fifteen or twenty miles in six hours, and others, like ourselves, stealing along against it at about the same rate. Half a dozen of these craft were quite near us, and the decks of most of those which were steering north had parties, including ladies, evidently proceeding to the "Springs." I desired Marble to sheer as close to these different

vessels as was convenient, having no other object in view than amusement, and fancying it might aid in diverting the thoughts of my sister from her own sorrows to the faces and concerns of others. The reader will have no difficulty in understanding that the *Wallingford*, constructed under the orders of an old sailor, and for his own uses, was a fast vessel. In this particular she had but one or two competitors on the river; packets belonging to Hudson, Poughkeepsie, and Sing Sing. She was now only in fair ballast-trim, and being admirably provided with sails, in the light wind we had, she actually went four feet to most of the other vessels in sight's three. My request to Marble—or order, as he chose to call it—was easily enough complied with, and we were soon coming up close in the quarter of a sloop that had its decks crowded with passengers who evidently belonged to the better class; while on its forecastle were several horses and a carriage; customary accompaniments to such a scene in that day.

I had not been so happy in a long time as I felt at that moment. Grace was better, as I fancied, at least, and it was certain that she was more composed and less nervous than I had seen her since my return; and this of itself was removing the weight of a mountain from my heart. There was Lucy, too, her rounded cheek rosy with the pleasure of the moment, full of health, and with eyes that never turned on me that they did not beam with confidence and kindness—the sincerest friendship, if not love—while every look, movement, syllable or gesture that was directed toward Grace betrayed how strongly the hearts of these two precious creatures were still knit together in sisterly affection. My guardian, too, seemed happier than he had been since our conversation on the state of my own feelings toward his daughter. He had made a condition that we should all—the doctor excepted—return to Clawbonny in time for service on the ensuing Sunday, and he was then actually engaged in looking over an old sermon for the occasion, though not a minute passed in which he did not drop the manuscript to gaze about him, in deep enjoyment of the landscape. The scene, moreover, was so full of repose, that even the movements of the different vessels scarce changed its Sabbath-like character. I repeat, that I had not felt so perfectly happy since I held my last conversation with the Salem Witches, in the Duomo of Firenze.

Marble was excessively delighted with the behavior of the *Wallingford*. The latter was a sloop somewhat smaller than common, though her accommodations were particularly commodious, while she was sparred on the scale of a flyer. Her greatest advantage in the way of sailing, however, would have been no great recommendation to her on a wind; for she was nearly start light, and might not have been able to carry full sail in hard November weather, even on the Hudson—a river on which serious accidents have been known to occur. There was little danger in midsummer, however; and we went gliding up on the quarter of the *Gull* of Troy, without feeling concern of any sort.

"What sloop is that?" demanded the skipper of the *Gull*, as our boom-end came within a fathom of his rail, our name being out of his view.

"The *Wallingford* of Clawbonny, just out of port, bound upon a party of pleasure."

Now Clawbonny was not then, nor is it now, what might be called a legal term. There was no such place known in law, beyond the right which usage gives: and I heard a low laugh among the passengers of the *Gull*, as they heard the homely appellation. This came from the equivocal position my family occupied, midway between the gentry and yeomanry of the State, as they both existed in 1803. Had I said the sloop came from near Coldenham, it would have been all right; for everybody who was then anybody in New York knew who the Coldens were; or Morrisania, the Morrises being people of mark; or twenty other places on the river; but the Wallingfords were as little known as Clawbonny, when you got fifteen or twenty miles from the spot where they had so long lived. This is just the difference between obscurity and notori-

ety. When the latter extends to an entire nation, it gives an individual, or a family, the note that frees them entirely from the imputation of existing under the first condition; and this note, favorably diffused through Christendom, forms a reputation —transmitted to posterity, it becomes fame. Unfortunately, neither we nor our place had even reached the first simple step in this scale of renown; and poor Clawbonny was laughed at, on account of something Dutch that was probably supposed to exist in the sound—the Anglo-Saxon race having a singular aptitude to turn up their noses at everything but their own possessions, and everybody but themselves. I looked at Lucy, with sensitive quickness, to see how she received this sneer on my birthplace; but, with her, it was so much a matter of course to think well of everything connected with the spot, its name as well as its more essential things, that I do not believe she perceived this little sign of derision.

While the passengers of the *Gull* felt this disposition to smile, it was very different with her skipper, his Dutch pilot, whose name was Abrahamus Van Valtenberg, but who was familiarly known as 'Brom Folleck, for so the children of New Netherlands twisted their cognomens in converting them into English; * the black cook, the mulatto steward, and the "all hands," who were one man and a boy. There had been generations of sloops which bore the name of *Wallingford,* as well as generations of men, at Clawbonny; and this every river-man knew. In point of fact, we counted four generations of men, and six of sloops. Now, none of these vessels was worthy of being mentioned, but this which my father had caused to be built; but she had a reputation that extended to everybody on the river. The effect of all this was to induce the skipper of the *Gull* to raise his hat and say:

"That, then, I suppose, is Mr. Wallingford himself—you are welcome back on the river; I remember the time well when your respected father would make that boat do anything but talk. Nothing but the new paint, which is different from the last, prevented me from knowing the sloop. Had I taken a look at her bows, this couldn't have happened."

This speech evidently gave me and my vessel an estimation with the passengers of the *Gull* that neither had enjoyed the moment before. There was some private conversation on the quarter-deck of the other vessel, and, then, a highly respectable and gentleman-like looking old man, came to the rail, bowed, and commenced a discourse.

"I have the pleasure of seeing Captain Wallingford, I believe," he remarked, "with whom my friends, the Mertons, came passengers from China. They have often expressed their sense of your civilities," he continued, as I bowed in acquiescence, "and declare they should ever wish to sail with you, were they again compelled to go to sea."

Now, this was viewing my relation to the Mertons in any point of view but that in which I wished it to be viewed, or indeed was just. Still it was natural; and the gentleman who spoke, a man of standing and character, no doubt fancied he was saying that which must prove particularly acceptable to me; another proof of how dangerous it is to attempt to decide on other men's feelings or affairs. I could not decline the discourse; and, while the *Wallingford* went slowly past the *Gull,* I was compelled to endure the torment of hearing the Mertons mentioned, again and again, in the hearing of Lucy and Grace; on the nerves of the latter of whom I knew it must be a severe trial. At length we got rid of this troublesome neighbor, though not until Lucy and her father were recognized, and spoken to by several of the ladies in the other party. While my late guardian and his daughter were thus engaged, I stole a glance at my sister.

* A story is told of a Scotchman of the name of Farquharson, who settled among the High Dutch on the Mohawk, some time previously to the Revolution; where, unable to pronounce his name, the worthy farmers called him Feuerstein (pronounced Firestyne). The son lived and died under this appellation; but the grandson, removing to a part of the country where English alone was spoken, chose to anglicize his name; and, by giving it a free translation, became Mr. Flint!

She was pale as death and seemed anxious to go below, whither I led her, most happily, I have every reason to think, as things turned out.

When the *Wallingford* had left the *Gull* some little distance astern, I returned to the deck, and Lucy went to take my place by the side of Grace's berth. She reappeared, however, in a very few minutes, saying that my sister felt an inclination to rest herself, and might fall asleep. Feeble, almost, as an infant, these frequent slumbers had become necessary, in a measure, to the patient's powers. Chloe coming up soon after with a report that her young mistress seemed to be in a doze, we all remained on deck, in order not to disturb her. In this manner, half an hour passed, and we had drawn quite near to another sloop that was going in the same direction with ourselves. At this moment, Mr. Hardinge was deeply immersed in his sermon, and I perceived that Lucy looked at him, from time to time, as if she expected to catch his eye. I fancied something distressed her, and yet it was not easy to imagine exactly what it could be.

"Do you not intend to go nearer the other sloop?" Lucy at length inquired, alluding to the vessel that was almost in a line with us; but to which I had ordered Neb to give a respectable berth.

"I thought the gossip of the last quite sufficient; but, if you like these interviews, certainly."

Lucy seemed embarrassed; she colored to her temples, paused a moment, and then added, affecting to laugh—and it was so seldom Lucy affected anything, but this time she *did* affect to laugh—as she said:

"I *do* wish to go near that sloop, though it is not exactly for the reason you suppose."

I could see she was distressed, though it was not yet easy to imagine the cause. Lucy's requests were laws to me, and Neb was ordered to sheer down on the quarter of this second sloop, as we had done on that of the first. As we drew near her, her stern told us that she was called the *Orpheus of Sing Sing*, a combination of names that proved some wag had been connected with the christening. Her decks had also a party of both sexes on them, though neither carriage nor horses. All this time, Lucy stood quite near me, as if reluctant to move, and when we were sufficiently near the sloop, she pressed still nearer to my side, in the way in which her sex are apt to appeal to those of the other who possess their confidence, when most feeling the necessity of support.

"Now, Miles," she said in an undertone, "*you* must 'speak that sloop,' as you call it; I can never hold a loud conversation of this sort in the presence of so many strangers."

"Very willingly, Lucy; though you will have the goodness to let me know exactly what I am to say."

"Certainly; begin, then, in your sailor fashion, and when that is done I will tell you what to add."

"Enough. *Orpheus* there!" I called out, just raising my voice sufficiently to be heard.

"Ay, ay; what's wanted?" answered the skipper, taking a pipe from his mouth, as he leaned with his back against his own tiller, in a way that was just in accordance with the sleepy character of the scene.

I looked at Lucy, as much as to say, "What next?"

"Ask him if Mrs. Drewett is on board his sloop—*Mrs.* Andrew Drewett, not *Mr.*—the old lady, I mean," added the dear girl, blushing to the eyes.

I was so confounded—I might almost add appalled—that it was with great difficulty I suppressed an exclamation. Command myself I did, however, and observing that the skipper was curiously awaiting my next question, I put it:

"Is *Mrs.* Andrew Drewett among your passengers, sir?" I inquired, with a cold distinctness.

My neighbor nodded his head, and spoke to some of his passengers, most of whom were on the main deck, seated on chairs, and concealed from us, as yet, by the *Wallingford's* mainsail, her boom being guyed out on the side next the *Orpheus*, with its end just clear of her quarter.

"She is, and wishes to know who makes the inquiry?" returned the Sing Sing skipper, in the sing-song manner in which ordinary folk repeat what is dictated.

"Say that Miss Hardinge has a message to Mrs. Drewett from Mrs. Ogilvie, who is on board that other sloop," added Lucy, in a low, and, as I thought, tremulous tone.

I was nearly choked; but made out to communicate the fact as directed. In an instant I heard the foot of one who leaped on the *Orpheus's* quarter-deck, and then Andrew Drewett appeared, hat in hand, a face all smiles, eyes that told his tale as plain as any tongue could have uttered it, and such salutations as denoted the most perfect intimacy. Lucy took my arm involuntarily, and I could feel that she trembled. The two vessels were now so near, and everything around us was so tranquil, that by Lucy's advancing to the *Wallingford's* quarter-deck, and Drewett's coming to the taffrail of the *Orpheus*, it was easy to converse without any unseemingly raising of the voice. All that had been said between me and the skipper, indeed, had been said on a key but little higher than common. By the change in Lucy's position I could no longer see her face; but I knew it was suffused, and that she was far from being as composed and collected as was usual with her demeanor. All this was death to my recent happiness, though I could not abstain from watching what now passed, with the vigilance of jealousy.

"Good morning," Lucy commenced, and the words were uttered in a tone that I thought bespoke great familiarity, if not confidence; "will you have the goodness to tell your mother that Mrs. Ogilvie begs she will not leave Albany until her arrival? The other sloop, Mrs. Ogilvie thinks, cannot be more than an hour or two after you, and she is very desirous of making a common party to—ah! there comes Mrs. Drewett," said Lucy, hastily interrupting herself, "and I can deliver my message myself."

Mrs. Drewett, coming aft at this instant, Lucy certainly did turn to her, and communicated a message which it seems the lady in the *Gull* had earnestly requested her to deliver in passing.

"And now," returned Mrs. Drewett, when Lucy had ceased, first civilly saluting me, "and now, my dear Lucy, we have something for you. So sudden was your departure, on the receipt of that naughty letter"—my letter, summoning the dear girl to the bedside of her friend, was meant—"that you left your work-box behind you, and as I knew that it contained many notes besides bank-notes, I would not allow it to be separated from me until we met. Here it is; in what manner shall we contrive to get it into your hands?"

Lucy started, and I could see that she both felt and looked anxious. As I afterward learned, she had been passing a day at Mrs. Drewett's villa, which joined her own, both standing on the rocks quite near to that spot which a mawkish set among us is trying to twist from plain, homely, up-and-down, old-fashioned Hell-Gate into the exquisite and lackadaisical corruption of *Hurl*-Gate—Heaven save the mark! What puny piece of folly and affectation will they attempt next? But Lucy was paying this visit when she received my letter, and it appears such was her haste to get to Grace that she quitted the house immediately, leaving behind her a small work-box *unlocked*, and in it various papers that she did not wish read. Of course one of Lucy's sentiments and tone could hardly suspect a lady, and Mrs. Drewett was strictly that, of rummaging her box or of reading her notes and letters; but one is never easy when such things can be supposed to be in the way of impertinent eyes. There are maids as well as mistresses, and I could see in a moment that she wished the box was again in her own possession. Under the circumstances, therefore, I felt it time to interfere.

"If your sloop will round-to, Mr. Drewett," I remarked, receiving a cold salutation from the gentleman in return for my own bow, the first sign of recognition that had passed between us, "I will round-to myself and send a boat for the box."

This proposal drew all eyes toward the skipper, who was still leaning against his tiller, smoking for life or death. It was not favorably received, extorting a grunt in reply, that any one could understand denoted dissent. The pipe was slowly removed, and the private opinion of this personage was pretty openly expressed in his Dutchified dialect.

"If a body coult get a wint for der askin'; dis might do very well," he said; "but nobody rounts-to mit a fair wint."

I have always remarked that they who have used a dialect different from the common forms of speech in their youth, and come afterward to correct it by intercourse with the world, usually fall back into their early infirmities in moments of trial, perplexity, or anger. This is easily explained. Habit has become a sort of nature in their childhood, and it is when most tried that we are the most natural. Then, this skipper, an Albany—or Al*bonn*y man, as he would probably have styled himself, had got down the river as far as Sing Sing, and had acquired a tolerable English; but, being now disturbed, he fell back upon his original mode of speaking, the certain proof that he would never give in. I saw at once the hopelessness of attempting to persuade one of his school, and had begun to devise some other scheme for getting the box on board, when to my surprise, and not a little to my concern, I saw Andrew Drewett, first taking the box from his mother, step upon the end of our main-boom, and move along the spar with the evident intention to walk as far as our deck and deliver Lucy her property with his own hands.

The whole thing occurred so suddenly, that there was no time for remonstrance. Young gentlemen who are thoroughly in love, are not often discreet in matters connected with their devotion to their mistresses. I presume Drewett saw the boom placed so favorably as to tempt him, and he fancied it would be a thing to mention to carry a lady her work-box across a bridge that was so precarious a footing. Had the spar lain on the ground, it would certainly have been no exploit at all for any young man to walk its length, carrying his arm full of work-boxes; but it was a very different matter when the same feat had to be performed on a sloop's boom in its place, suspended over the water, with the sail set, and the vessel in motion. This Drewett soon discovered, for, advancing a step or two, he grasped the topping-lift, which luckily for him happened to be taut, for a support. All this occurred before there was time for remonstrance, or even for thought. At the same instant Neb, in obedience to a sign previously given by me, had put the helm down a little, and the boom-end was already twenty feet from the quarter-deck of the *Orpheus*.

Of course, all the women screamed, or exclaimed, on some key or other. Poor Mrs. Drewett hid her face, and began to moan her son as lost. I did not dare look at Lucy, who remained quiet as to voice, after the first involuntary exclamation, and as immovable as a statue. Luckily her face was from me. As Drewett was evidently discomposed, I thought it best, however, to devise something not only for his relief, but, for that of Lucy's box, which was in quite as much jeopardy as the young man himself; more so, indeed, if the latter could swim. I was on the point of calling out to Drewett to hold on, and I would cause the boom-end to reach over the *Orpheus's* main-deck, after which he might easily drop down among his friends, when Neb, finding some one to take the helm, suddenly stood at my side.

"He drop that box, sartain, Masser Mile," half whispered the negro; "he leg begin to shake already, and he won'erful skear'd!"

"I would not have that happen for a good deal. Can you save it, Neb?"

"Sartain, sir. Only hab to run out on 'e boom and bring it in, and gib it Miss Lucy: she mighty partic'lar about dat werry box, Masser Mile, as I see a hundred time, and more too."

"Well, lay out, boy, and bring it in, and look to your footing, Neb."

This was all Neb wanted. The fellow had feet shaped a good deal like any other aquatic bird, with the essential difference,

however, that no small part of his foundation had been laid abaft the perpendicular of the tendon Achilles, and being without shoes, he could nearly encircle a small spar in his grasp. Often and often had I seen Neb run out on a topsail-yard, the ship pitching heavily, catching at the lift, and it was a mere trifle after that to run out on a spar as large as the *Wallingford's* main-boom. A tolerably distinctive scream from Chloe first apprised me that the negro was in motion. Looking in that direction, I saw him walking steadily along the boom, notwithstanding Drewett's loud remonstrances and declarations that he wanted no assistance, until he reached the spot where the young gentleman stood grasping the lift, with his legs submitting to more tremor than was convenient. Neb now grinned, looked as amiable as possible, held out his hand, and revealed the object of his visit.

"Masser Mile t'ink 'e gentleum better gib *me* Miss Lucy box," said Neb, as politely as he knew how.

I believe in my soul that Drewett could have kissed Neb, so glad was he to obtain this little relief. The box was yielded without the slightest objection, Neb receiving it with a bow, after which the negro turned round as coolly as if he were on the deck, and walked deliberately and steadily in to the mast. He stopped an instant just at the small of the spar, to look back at Drewett, who was saying something to pacify his mother, and I observed that, as he stood with his heels in a line, the toes nearly met underneath the boom, which his feet grasped something in the manner of talons. A deep sigh reached my ear as Neb bounded lightly on deck, and I knew whence it came by the exclamation of "De *fel*-ler!"

As for Neb, he advanced with his prize, which he offered to Lucy with one of his best bows, but in a way to show he was not conscious of having performed any unusual exploit. Lucy handed the box to Chloe, without averting her eyes from Drewett, in whose situation she manifested a good deal more concern than I liked, or fancied he deserved.

"Thank you, Mr. Drewett," she said, affecting to think the box had been recovered altogether by his address; "it is now safe, and there is no longer any necessity for your coming here. Let Mr. Wallingford do what he says"—I had mentioned, in a low voice, the practicability of my own scheme—"and return to your own sloop."

But two things now interposed to the execution of this very simple expedient. The first was Drewett's pride, blended with a little obstinacy, and the other was the "Albonny" skipper's pride, blended with a good deal of obstinacy. The first did not like to retreat, after Neb had so clearly demonstrated it was no great matter to walk on the boom, and the latter, soured by the manner in which we had outsailed him, and fancying Andrew had deserted to get on board a faster vessel, resented the whole by sheering away from us to the distance of a hundred yards. I saw that there remained but a single expedient, and set about adopting it without further delay.

"Take good hold of the lift, Mr. Drewett, and steady yourself with both hands; ease away the peak halyards to tauten that lift a little more forward. Now, one of you stand by to ease off the guy handsomely, and the rest come aft to the main-sheet. Look out for yourself, Mr. Drewett, we are about to haul in the boom, when it will be a small matter to get you in upon the taffrail. Stand by to luff handsomely, so as to keep the boom as steady as possible."

But Drewett clamorously protested against our doing anything of the sort. He was getting used to his situation, and intended to come in Neb-fashion in a minute more. All he asked was not to be hurried.

"No—no—touch nothing, I entreat of you, *Captain* Wallingford"—he said earnestly. "If that black can do it, surely I ought to do it, too."

"But the black has claws, and you have none, sir; then he is a sailor, and used to such things, and you are none, sir. Moreover, he was barefooted, while you have got on stiff, and, I dare say, slippery boots."

"Yes, the boots *are* an incumbrance. If I could only throw them off, I should do well enough. As it is, however, I hope to have the honor of shaking you by the hand, Miss Hardinge, without the disgrace of being helped."

Mr. Hardinge here expostulated, but all in vain; for I saw plainly enough Drewett was highly excited, and that he was preparing for a start. These signs were now so apparent that all of us united our voices in remonstrances; and Lucy said imploringly to me, "*Do* not let him move, Miles—I have heard him say he cannot swim."

It was too late. Pride, mortified vanity, obstinacy, love, or what you will, rendered the young man deaf, and away he went, abandoning the lift, his sole protection. I saw, the moment he quitted his grasp, that he would never reach the mast, and made my arrangements accordingly. I called to Marble to stand by the luff; and, just as the words passed my lips, a souse into the water told the whole story. The first glance at poor Drewett's frantic manner of struggling told me that Lucy was really aware of his habits, and that he could not swim. I was in light duck, jacket and trousers, with seaman's pumps; and placing a foot on the rail, I alighted alongside of the drowning young man, just as he went under. Well assured he would reappear, I waited for that, and presently I got a view of his hair, within reach of my arm, and I grasped it, in a way to turn him on his back, and bring his face uppermost. At this moment the sloop was gliding away from us, Marble having instantly put the helm hard down, in order to round-to. As I afterward learned, the state of the case was no sooner understood in the other sloop, than the Albonny men gave in, and imitated the *Wallingford*.

There was no time for reflection. As soon as Drewett's hair was in my grasp, I raised his head from the water, by an effort that forced me under it, to let him catch his breath; and then relaxed the power by which it had been done, to come up myself. I had done this to give him a moment to recover his recollection, in the hope he would act reasonably; and I now desired him to lay his two hands on my shoulders, permit his body to sink as low as possible and breathe, and trust the rest to me. If the person in danger can be made to do this, an ordinarily good swimmer could tow him a mile, without any unusual effort. But the breathing spell afforded to Drewett had the effect just to give him strength to struggle madly for existence, without aiding his reason. On the land, he would have been nothing in my hands; but in the water, the merest boy may become formidable. God forgive me, if I do him injustice! but I have sometimes thought, since, that Drewett was perfectly conscious who I was, and that he gave some vent to his jealous distrust of Lucy's feelings toward me. This may be all imagination; but I certainly heard the words, "Lucy," "Wallingford," "Clawbonny," "hateful," muttered by the man, even as he struggled there for life. The advantage given him by turning to allow him to put his hands on my shoulders, liked to have cost me dear. Instead of doing as I directed, he grasped my neck with both arms, and seemed to wish to mount on my head, forcing his own shoulders quite out of water, and mine, by that much weight, beneath it. It was while we were thus placed, his mouth within an inch or two of my very ear, that I heard the words muttered which have been mentioned. It is possible, however, that he was unconscious of that which terror and despair extorted from him.

I saw no time was to be lost, and my efforts became desperate. I first endeavored to swim with this great incumbrance; but it was useless. The strength of Hercules could not long have buoyed up the under body of such a load sufficiently to raise the nostrils for breath; and the convulsive twitches of Drewett's arms were near strangling me. I must throw him off, or drown. Abandoning the attempt to swim, I seized his hands with mine, and endeavored to loosen his grasp of my neck. Of course we both sunk while I was thus engaged; for it was impossible

to keep my head above water, by means of my feet alone, with a man of some size riding, from the shoulders up, above the level of my chin.

I can scarcely describe what followed. I confess I thought no longer of saving Drewett's life, but only of saving my own. We struggled there in the water like the fiercest enemies, each aiming for the mastery, as, if one were to live, the other must die. We sunk and rose to the surface for air, solely by my efforts, no less than three times; Drewett getting the largest benefits by the latter, thus renewing his strength; while mine, great as it was by nature, began gradually to fail. A struggle so terrific could not last long. We sunk a fourth time, and I felt it was not to rise again, when relief came from an unexpected quarter. From boyhood, my father had taught me the important lesson of keeping my eyes open under water. By means of this practice, I not only *felt*, but *saw* the nature of the tremendous struggle that was going on. It also gave me a slight advantage over Drewett, who closed his eyes, by enabling me to see how to direct my own exertions.

While sinking, as I believed, for the last time, I saw a large object approaching me in the water, which, in the confusion of the moment, I took for a shark, though sharks never ascended the Hudson so high, and were even rare at New York. There it was, however, swimming toward us, and even descending lower, as if to pass beneath, in readiness for the fatal snap. Beneath it did pass, and I felt it pressing upward, raising Drewett and myself to the surface. As I got a glimpse of the light, and a delicious draft of air, Drewett was drawn from my neck by Marble, whose encouraging voice sounded like music in my ears. At the next instant my shark emerged, puffing like a porpoise; and then I heard:

"Hole on, Masser Mile—here he nigger close by!"

I was dragged into the boat, I scarce know how, and lay down completely exhausted; while my late companion seemed to me to be a lifeless corpse. In a moment, Neb, dripping like a black river-god, and glistening like a wet bottle, placed himself in the bottom of the boat, took my head into his lap, and began to squeeze the water from my hair, and to dry my face with some one's handkerchief—I trust it was not his own.

"Pull away, lads, for the sloop," said Marble, as soon as everybody was out of the river. "This gentleman seems to have put on the hatches for the last time—as for Miles, *he'll* never drown in fresh water."

THE END OF "AFLOAT AND ASHORE."

THE WATER-WITCH.

CHAPTER I.

"What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?
Or shall we on without apology?"
—ROMEO AND JULIET.

THE fine estuary which penetrates the American coast between the fortieth and forty-first degrees of latitude, is formed by the confluence of the Hudson, the Hackensack, the Passaic, the Raritan, and a multitude of smaller streams, all of which pour their tribute into the ocean within the space named. The islands of Nassau and Staten are happily placed to exclude the tempests of the open sea, while the deep and broad arms of the latter offer every desirable facility for foreign trade and internal intercourse. To this fortunate disposition of land and water, with a temperate climate, a central position, and an immense interior that is now penetrated in every direction either by artificial or by natural streams, the city of New York is indebted for its extraordinary prosperity. Though not wanting in beauty, there are many bays that surpass this in the charms of scenery; but it may be questioned if the world possesses another site that unites so many natural advantages for the growth and support of a widely-extended commerce. As if never wearied with her kindness, Nature has placed the island of Manhattan at the precise point that is the most desirable for the position of a town. Millions might inhabit the spot, and yet a ship should load near every door; and while the surface of the land just possesses the inequalities that are required for health and cleanliness, its bosom is filled with the material most needed in construction.

The consequences of so unusual a concurrence of favorable circumstances are well known. A vigorous, healthful, and continued growth, that has no parallel even in the history of this extraordinary and fortunate country, has already raised the insignificant provincial town of the last century to the level of the second-rate cities of the other hemisphere. The New Amsterdam of this continent already rivals its parent of the other; and, so far as human powers may pretend to predict, a few fleeting years will place her on a level with the proudest capitals of Europe.

It would seem that, as Nature has given its periods to the stages of animal life, it has also set limits to all moral and political ascendency. While the city of the Medici is receding from its crumbling walls, like the human form shrinking into "the lean and slippered pantaloon," the Queen of the Adriatic sleeping on her muddy isles, and Rome itself is only to be traced by fallen temples and buried columns, the youthful vigor of America is fast covering the wilds of the West with the happiest fruits of human industry.

By the Manhattanese who is familiar with the forest of masts, the miles of wharves, the countless villas, the hundred churches, the castles, the smoking and busy vessels that crowd his bay, the daily increase and the general movement of his native town, the picture we are about to sketch will scarcely be recognized. He who shall come a generation later will probably smile, that subject of admiration should have been found in the existing condition of the city; and yet we shall attempt to carry the recollections of the reader but a century back in the brief history of his country.

As the sun rose on the morning of the

3d June, 171–, the report of a cannon was heard rolling along the waters of the Hudson. Smoke issued from an embrasure of a small fortress, that stood on the point of land where the river and bay mingle their waters. The explosion was followed by the appearance of a flag, which, as it rose to the summit of its staff and unfolded itself heavily in the light current of air, showed the blue field and the red cross of the English ensign.

At the distance of several miles, the dark masts of a ship were to be seen, faintly relieved by the verdant background of the heights of Staten Island. A little cloud floated over this object, and then an answering signal came dull and rumbling to the town. The flag that the cruiser set was not visible in the distance.

At the precise moment that the noise of the first gun was heard, the door of one of the principal dwellings of the town opened, and a man, who might have been its master, appeared on its stoop, as the ill-arranged entrances of the buildings of the place are still termed. He was seemingly prepared for some expedition that was likely to consume the day. A black of middle age followed the burgher to the threshold; and another negro, who had not yet reached the stature of manhood, bore under his arm a small bundle, that probably contained articles of the first necessity to the comfort of his master.

"Thrift, Mr. Euclid, thrift is your true philosopher's stone," commenced, or rather continued, in a rich, full-mouthed Dutch, the proprietor of the dwelling, who had evidently been giving a leave-taking charge to his principal slave, before quitting the house; "thrift hath made many a man rich, but it never yet brought any one to want. It is thrift which has built up the credit of my house, and though it is said by myself, a broader back and firmer base belong to no merchant in the colonies. You are but the reflection of your master's prosperity, you rogue, and so much the greater need that you look to his interests. If the substance is wasted, what will become of the shadow? When I get delicate you will sicken; when I am a-hungered, you will be famished; when I die, you may be —ahem—Euclid, I leave thee in charge with goods and chattels, house and stable, with my character in the neighborhood. I am going to the Lust in Rust, for a mouthful of better air. Plague and fevers! I believe the people will continue to come into this crowded town, until it gets to be as pestilent as Rotterdam in the dog days. You have now come to years when a man obtains his reflection, boy, and I expect suitable care and discretion about the premises while my back is turned. Now, harkee, sirrah: I am not entirely pleased with the character of thy company. It is not altogether as respectable as becomes the confidential servant of a man of a certain station in the world. There are thy two cousins, Brom and Kobus, who are no better than a couple of blackguards; and as for the English negro, Diomede—he is a devil's imp! Thou hast the other locks at disposal, and"—drawing with visible reluctance the instrument from his pocket—"here is the key of the stable. Not a hoof is to quit it, but to go to the pump; and see that each animal has its food to a minute. The devil's roysterers! a Manhattan negro takes a Flemish gelding for a gaunt hound that is never out of breath, and away he goes at night, scampering along the highways like a Yankee witch switching through the air on a broomstick; but mark me, Master Euclid, I have eyes in my head, as thou knowest by bitter experience! De'ye remember, ragamuffin, the time when I saw thee, from the Hague, riding the beasts, as if the devil spurred them, along the dyke of Leyden, without remorse as without leave?"

"I alway b'rieve some make-mischief tell massa dat time," returned the negro sulkily, though not without doubt.

"His own eyes were the tell-tales. If masters had no eyes, a pretty world would the negroes make of it! I have got the measure of every black heel on the island registered in the big book you see me so often looking into, especially on Sundays; and, if either of the tire-legs I have named dares to enter my grounds, let him expect to pay a visit to the city provost. What

do the wildcats mean? Do they think that the geldings were bought in Holland, with charges for breaking in, shipment, insurance, freight, and risk of diseases, to have their flesh melted from their ribs like a cook's candle!"

"Ere no'tin done in all 'e island, but a color' man do him! He do a mischief, and he do all a work, too! I won'er what color massa t'ink war Captain Kidd?"

"Black or white, he was a rank rogue; and you see the end he came to. I warrant you, now, that water-thief began his iniquities by riding the neighbors' horses at night. His fate should be a warning to every nigger in the colony. The imps of darkness! The English have no such scarcity of rogues at home, that they could not spare us the pirate to hang up on one of the islands, as a scarecrow to the blacks of Manhattan."

"Well, I t'ink 'e sight do a white man some good, too," returned Euclid, who had all the pertinacity of a spoiled Dutch negro, singularly blended with affection for him in whose service he had been born. "I hear ebberybody say, 'ere war' but two color' man in he ship, an 'em both war' Guinea-born."

"A modest tongue, thou midnight scamperer! look to my geldings. Here—here are two Dutch florins, three stivers, and a Spanish pistareen for thee; one of the florins is for thy old mother, and with the others thou canst lighten thy heart in the Paus merry-making: if I hear that either of thy rascally cousins, or the English Diomede, has put a leg across beast of mine, it will be the worse for all Africa! Famine and skeletons! Here have I been seven years trying to fatten the nags, and they still look more like weasles than a pair of solid geldings."

The close of this speech was rather muttered in the distance, and by way of soliloquy, than actually administered to the namesake of the great mathematician. The air of the negro had been a little equivocal during the parting admonition. There was an evident struggle in his mind between an innate love of disobedience and a secret dread of his master's means of information. So long as the latter continued in sight, the black watched his form in doubt; and when it had turned a corner he stood at a gaze for a moment, with a negro on a neighboring stoop: then both shook their heads significantly, laughed aloud, and retired. That night the confidential servant attended to the interests of his absent master with a fidelity and care which proved that he felt his own existence identified with that of a man who claimed so close a right in his own person; and just as the clock struck ten, he and the negro last mentioned mounted the sluggish and overfattened horses, and galloped as hard as foot could be laid to the earth, several miles deeper into the island, to attend a frolic at one of the usual haunts of the people of their color and condition.

Had Alderman Myndert Van Beverout suspected the calamity which was so soon to succeed his absence, it is probable that his mien would have been less composed, as he pursued his way from his own door, on the occasion named. That he had confidence in the virtue of his menaces, however, may be inferred from the tranquillity which immediately took possession of features that were never disturbed without wearing an appearance of unnatural effort. The substantial burgher was a little turned of fifty; and an English wag who had imported from the mother country a love for the humor of his nation, had once, in a conflict of wits before the city council, described him to be a man of alliterations. When called upon to explain away this breach of parliamentary decorum, the punster had got rid of the matter by describing his opponent to be "short, solid, and sturdy in stature; full, flushed, and funny in face; and proud, ponderous, and pragmatical in propensities." But, as is usual, in all sayings of effort, there was more smartness than truth in this description, though, after making a trifling allowance for the coloring of political rivalry, the reader may receive its physical portion as sufficiently descriptive to answer all the necessary purposes of this tale. If we add, that he was a trader of great wealth and shrewdness, and a

bachelor, we need say no more in this stage of the narrative.

Notwithstanding the early hour at which this industrious and flourishing merchant quitted his abode, his movement along the narrow streets of his native town was measured and dignified. More than once he stopped to speak to some favorite family-servant, invariably terminating his inquiries after the health of the master, by some facetious observation adapted to the habits and capacity of the slave. From this it would seem that, while he had so exaggerated notions of domestic discipline, the worthy burgher was far from being one who indulged, by inclination, in the menaces he has been heard to utter. He had just dismissed one of those loitering negroes, when, on turning a corner, a man of his own color, for the first time that morning, suddenly stood before him. The startled citizen made an involuntary movement to avoid the unexpected interview, and then, perceiving the difficulty of such a step, he submitted, with as good a grace as if it had been one of his own seeking.

"The orb of day—the morning gun—and Mr. Alderman Van Beverout!" exclaimed the individual encountered. "Such is the order of events, at this early hour, on each successive revolution of our earth."

The countenance of the Alderman had barely time to recover its composure, ere he was required to answer to this free and somewhat facetious salutation. Uncovering his head, he bowed so ceremoniously as to leave the other no reason to exult in his pleasantry, as he answered:

"The colony has reason to regret the services of a governor who can quit his bed so soon. That we of business habits stir betimes is quite in reason; but there are those in this town, who would scarce believe their eyes, did they enjoy my present happiness."

"Sir, there are many in this colony, who have great reason to distrust their senses, though none can be mistaken in believing they see in Alderman Van Beverout a well-employed man. He that dealeth in the produce of the beaver must have the animal's perseverance and forethought! Now, were I king-at-arms, there should be a concession made in thy favor, Myndert, of a shield bearing the animal mordant, a mantle of fur, with two Mohawk hunters for supporters, and the motto, 'Industry.'"

"Or what think you, my lord," returned the other, who did not more than half relish the pleasantry of his companion, "of a spotless field for a clear conscience, with an open hand for a crest, and the motto, 'Frugality and Justice?'"

"I like the open hand, though the conceit is pretending. I see you would intimate that the Van Beverouts have not need, at this late day, to search a herald's office for honors. I remember, now I bethink me, on some occasion to have seen their bearings, a windmill, courant; dyke, coulant; field, vert, sprinkled with black cattle—No! then memory is treacherous: the morning air is pregnant with food for the imagination!"

"Which is not a coin to satisfy a creditor, my lord," said the caustic Myndert.

"Therein has truth been pithily spoken. This is an ill judged step, Alderman Van Beverout, that lets a gentleman out by night, like the ghost in Hamlet, to flee into the narrow house with the crowing of the cock. The ear of my royal cousin hath been poisoned, worse than was the ear of 'murdered Denmark,' or the partisans of this Mister Hunter would have little cause to triumph."

"Is it not possible to give such pledges to those who have turned the key, as will enable your lordship to apply the antidote?"

The question struck a chord that changed the whole manner of the other. His air, which had borne the character of a genteel trifler, became more grave and dignified; and notwithstanding there was the evidence of a reckless disposition in his features, dress and carriage, his tall and not ungraceful form, as he walked slowly onward, by the side of the compact alderman, was not without much of that insinuating ease and blandishment, which long familiaity with good company can give even to the lowest moral worth.

"Your question, worthy sir, manifests great goodness of heart, and corroborates that reputation for generosity the world so freely gives. It is true that the Queen has been persuaded to sign the mandate of my recall, and it is certain that Mr. Hunter has the government of the colony; but these are facts that might be reversed, were I once in a position to approach my kinswoman. I do not disclaim certain indiscretions, sir; it would ill become me to deny them, in presence of one whose virtue is as severe as that of Alderman Van Beverout. I have my feelings: perhaps, as you have just been pleased to intimate, it would have been better had my motto been frugality; but the open hand, dear sir, is a part of the design you will not deny me, either. If I have weaknesses, my enemies cannot refuse to say that I never yet deserted a friend."

"Not having had occasion to tax your friendship, I shall not be the first to make this charge."

"Your impartiality has come to be a proverb! 'As honest as Alderman Van Beverout,' 'As generous as Alderman Van Beverout,' are terms in each man's mouth; some say 'as rich' (the small blue eyes of the burgher twinkled). But honesty, and riches, and generosity are of little value without influence. Men should have their natural consideration in society. Now is the colony rather Dutch than English, and yet, you see, how few names are found in the list of the council, that have been known in the province half a century! Here are your Alexanders and Heathcotes, your Morrises and Kennedies, De Lanceys and Livingstons, filling the council and the legislative halls; but we find few of the Van Rensselaers, Van Courtlandts, Van Schuylers, Stuyvesants, Van Beekmans, and Van Beverouts, in their natural stations. All nations and religions have precedency, in the royal favor, over the children of the Patriarchs. The Bohemian Felipses; the Huguenot De Lanceys, and Bayards, and Jays; the king-hating Morrises and Ludlows—all have greater estimation in the eyes of government, than the most ancient Patroon!"

"This has long and truly been the case. I cannot remember when it was otherwise!"

"It may not be denied. But it would little become political discretion to affect precipitancy in the judgment of character. If my own administration can be stigmatized with the same apparent prejudice, it proves the clearer how strong is misrepresentation at home. Time was wanting to enlighten my mind, and that time has been refused me. In another year, my worthy sir, the council should have been filled with Vans!"

"In such a case, my lord, the unhappy condition in which you are now placed might indeed have been avoided."

"Is it too late to arrest the evil? It is time Anne had been undeceived, and her mind regained. There wanteth nothing to such a consummation of justice, sir, but opportunity. It touches me to the heart to think that this disgrace should befall one so near the royal blood! 'Tis a spot on the escutcheon of the crown that all loyal subjects must feel desirous to efface, and so small an effort would effect the object, too, with certain—Mr. Alderman Myndert Van Beverout?"

"My lord, late governor," returned the other, observing that his companion hesitated.

"What think you of this Hanoverian settlement? Shall a German wear the crown of a Plantagenet?"

"It hath been worn by a Hollander."

"Aptly answered. Worn, and worn worthily! There is affinity between the people, and there is reason in that reply. How have I failed in wisdom, in not seeking earlier the aid of thy advice, excellent sir! Ah, Myndert, there is a blessing on the enterprise of all who come of the Low Countries!"

"They are industrious to earn, and slow to squander."

"That expenditure is the ruin of many a worthy subject! And yet accident—chance—fortune—or whatever you may choose to call it, interferes nefariously at times with a gentleman's prosperity. I am an adorer of constancy in friendship, sir, and hold the principle that men should

aid each other through this dark vale of life—Mr. Alderman Van Beverout?"

"My Lord Cornbury?"

"I was about to say, that should I quit the Province without expressing part of the regret I feel at not having sooner ascertained the merits of its original owners, and your own in particular, I should do injustice to sensibilities that are only too acute for the peace of him who endures them."

"Is there then hope that your lordship's creditor will relent, or has the earl furnished means to open the prison door?"

"You use the pleasantest terms, sir!—but I love directness of language above all other qualities. No doubt the prison door, as you have so clearly expressed it, might be opened, and lucky would be the man who should turn the key. I am pained when I think of the displeasure of the Queen, which, sooner or later, will surely visit my luckless persecutors. On the other hand I find relief in thinking of the favor she will extend to those who have proved my friends in such a strait. They that wear crowns love not to see disgrace befall the meanest of their blood, for something of the taint may sully even the ermine of Majesty. Mr. Alderman?"

"My Lord?"

"How fare the Flemish geldings?"

"Bravely, and many thanks, my lord; the rogues are as fat as butter! There is hope of a little rest for the innocent, since business calls me to the Lust in Rust. There should be a law, lord governor, to gibbet the black that rides a beast at night."

"I bethought of some condign punishment for so heartless a crime, but there is little hope for it under the administration of this Mr. Hunter. Yes, sir, were I once more in the presence of my royal cousin, there would quickly be an end to this delusion, and the colony should be once more restored to a healthful state. The men of a generation should cease to lord it over the men of a century. But we must be wary of letting our design, dear sir, get wind; it is a truly Dutch idea, and the profits, both pecuniary and political, should belong to gentlemen of that descent—my dear Van Beverout?"

"My good lord?"

"Is the blooming Alida obedient? Trust me, there has no family event occurred during my residence in the colony, in which I have taken a nearer interest than in that desirable connection. The wooing of the young Patroon of Kinderhook is an affair of concern to the province. It is a meritorious youth!"

"With an excellent estate, my lord!"

"And a gravity beyond his years."

"I would give a guarantee, at a risk, that two-thirds of his income go to increase the capital, at the beginning of each season?"

"He seems a man to live on air!"

"My old friend, the last Patroon, left noble assets," continued the alderman, rubbing his hands, "besides the manor."

"Which is no paddock!"

"It reaches from the Hudson to the line of Massachusetts. A hundred thousand acres of hill and bottom, and well peopled by frugal Hollanders."

"Respectable in possession, and a mine of gold in reversion! Such men, sir, should be cherished. We owe it to his station to admit him to a share of this our project to undeceive the queen. How superior are the claims of such a gentleman to the empty pretensions of your Captain Ludlow!"

"He has truly a very good and improving estate!"

"These Ludlows, sir, people that fled the realm for plotting against the crown, are offensive to a loyal subject. Indeed, too much of this objection may be imputed to many in the province, that come of English blood. I am sorry to say that they are fomenters of discord, disturbers of the public mind, and captious disputants about prerogatives and vested rights. But there is a repose in the Dutch character which lends it dignity! The descendants of the Hollanders are men to be counted on; where we leave them to-day we see them to-morrow. As we say in politics' sir, we know where to find them. Does it not seem to you particularly offensive that this Captain Ludlow should com-

mand the only royal cruiser on the station?"

"I should like it better, my lord, were he to serve in Europe," returned the alderman, glancing a look behind him, and lowering his voice. "There was lately a rumor that his ship was in truth to be sent among the islands."

"Matters are getting very wrong, most worthy sir; and the greater the necessity there should be one at court to undeceive the queen. Innovators should be made to give way to men whose names are historical in the colony."

"'Twould be no worse for her Majesty's credit."

"'Twould be another jewel in her crown! Should this Captain Ludlow actually marry your niece, the family would altogether change its character—I have the worst memory—thy mother, Myndert, was a—a——"

"The pious woman was a Van Busser."

"The union of thy sister with the Huguenot then reduces the fair Alida to the quality of a half-blood. The Ludlow connection would destroy the leaven of the race! I think the man is penniless!"

"I cannot say that, my lord, for I would not willingly injure the credit of my worst enemy; but, though wealthy, he is far from having the estate of the young Patroon of Kinderhook."

"He should indeed be sent into the Indies—Myndert!"

"My lord?"

"It would be unjust to my sentiments in favor of Mr. Oloff Van Staats, were we to exclude him from the advantages of our project. This much shall I exact from your friendship, in his favor; the necessary sum may be divided, in moieties, between you; a common bond shall render the affair compact; and then, as we shall be masters of our own secret, there can be little doubt of the prudence of our measures. The amount is written in this bit of paper."

"Two thousand pounds, my lord!"

"Pardon me, my dear sir; not a penny more than one for each of you. Justice to Van Staats requires that you let him into the affair. Were it not for the suit with your niece, I should take the young gentleman with me, to push his fortune at court."

"Truly, my lord, this greatly exceeds my means. The high prices for furs the last season, and delays in returns, have placed a seal upon our silver——"

"The premium would be high."

"Coin is getting so scarce daily that the face of a Carolus is almost as great a stranger as the face of a debtor——"

"The returns certain."

"While every one's creditors meet him at every corner——"

"The concern would be altogether Dutch."

"And last advices from Holland tell us to reserve our gold for some extraordinary movements in the commercial world."

"Mr. Alderman Myndert Van Beverout!"

"My Lord Viscount Cornbury!"

"Plutus preserve thee, sir—but have a care; though I scent the morning air, and must return, it is not forbid to tell the secrets of my prison-house. There is one in yonder case who whispers that the Skimmer of the Seas is on the coast! Be wary, worthy burgher, or the second part of the tragedy of Kidd may be yet enacted in these seas."

"I leave such transactions to my superiors," retorted the Alderman, with another stiff and ceremonious bow. "Enterprises that are said to have occupied the Earl of Bellamont, Governor Fletcher, and my Lord Cornbury, are above the ambition of an humble merchant."

"Adieu, tenacious sir; quiet thine impatience for the extraordinary Dutch movements!" said Cornbury, affecting to laugh, though he secretly felt the sting the other had applied, since common report implicated not only him, but his two official predecessors, in several of the lawless proceedings of the American buccaneers. "Be vigilant, or la demoiselle Barberie will give another cross to the purity of the stagnant pool!"

The bows that were exchanged were strictly in character. The Alderman was

unmoved, rigid, and formal, while his companion could not forget his ease of manner, even at a moment of so much vexation. Foiled in an effort that nothing but his desperate condition, and nearly desperate character, could have induced him to attempt, the degenerate descendant of the virtuous Clarendon walked toward his place of confinement with the step of one who assumed a superiority over his fellows, and yet with a mind so indurated by habitual depravity as to have left it scarcely the trace of a dignified or virtuous quality.

CHAPTER II.

"His words are bonds, his oaths are orders;
His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate."
—TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

THE philosophy of Alderman Van Beverout was not easily disturbed. Still there was a play of the nether muscles of the face, which might be construed into self-complacency, at his victory, while a certain contraction of those which controlled the expression of the forehead seemed to betray a full consciousness of the imminent risk he had run. The left hand was thrust into a pocket, where it diligently fingered the provision of Spanish coin without which the merchant never left his abode; while the other struck the cane it held on the pavement, with the force of a resolute and decided man. In this manner he proceeded in his walk for several minutes longer, shortly quitting the lower streets, to enter one that ran along the ridge which crowned the land in that quarter of the island. Here he soon stopped before the door of a house which, in that provincial town, had altogether the air of a patrician dwelling.

Two false gables, each of which was surmounted by an iron weathercock, intersected the roof of this building, and the high and narrow stoop was built of the red freestone of the country. The material of the edifice itself, was, as usual, the small, hard brick of Holland, painted a delicate cream color.

A single blow of the massive glittering knocker brought a servant to the door. The promptitude with which the summons was answered showed that, notwithstanding the early hour, the Alderman was an expected guest. The countenance of him who acted as porter betrayed no surprise when he saw the person who applied for admission, and every movement of the black denoted preparation and readiness for his reception. Declining his invitation to enter, however, the Alderman placed his back against the iron railings of the stoop, and opened a discourse with the negro. The latter was aged, with a grizzled head, a nose that was leveled nearly to the plane of his face, features that were wrinkled and confused, and with a form which, though still solid, was bending with its load of years.

"Brave cheer to thee, old Cupid!" commenced the burgher, in the hearty and cordial manner with which the masters of that period were wont to address their indulged slaves. "A clear conscience is a good night-cap, and you look bright as the morning sun! I hope my friend the young Patroon has slept sound as yourself, and that he has shown his face already to prove it."

The negro answered with the slow, clipping manner that characterized his condition and years.

"He'm werry wakeful, Massa Al'erman. I t'ink he no sleep half the time lately. All he a'tiverty and wiwacerty gone, an' he do no single t'ing but smoke. A gentle'um who smoke alway, Massa Al'erman, get to be a melercholy man at last. I do t'ink ere be one young lady in York who be he deat' some time!"

"We'll find the means to get the pipe out of his mouth," said the other, looking askance at the black, as if to express more than he uttered. "Romance and pretty girls play the deuce with our philosophy in youth, as thou knowest by experience, old Cupid."

"I no good for anyt'ing dat-a-way now, not'ing," calmly returned the black. "I see a one time when few color't man in York had more respect among a fair sec', but dat a great while gone by. Now de modder of your Euclid, Massa Al'erman, war young herself, and I used to visit at

de al'erman's fadder's; afore a English come, and when ole Patroon war a young man. Golly! I great affection for Euclid, do' a young dog nebber come a near me!"

"He's a blackguard! My back is no sooner turned than the rascal's atop of one of his master's geldings."

"He'm werry young, Massa Myn'ert; no one get wis'om 'fore a gray hair."

"He's forty, every minute; and the rogue gets impudence with his years. Age is a reverend and respectable condition when it brings gravity and thought; but, if a young fool be tiresome, an old fool is contemptible. I'll warrant me, you never were so thoughtless, or so heartless, Cupid, as to ride an overworked beast at night."

"Well, I get pretty ole, Massa Myn'ert, and I forget all he do when a young man. But here be'e Patroon, who know how to tell 'e Al'erman such t'ing better than a poor color' slave."

"A fair rising and a lucky day to you, Patroon," cried the alderman, saluting a large, slow-moving gentlemanly-looking young man of five-and-twenty, who advanced with the gravity of one of twice that number of years, from the interior of the house toward its outer door. "The winds are bespoken, and here is as fine a day as ever shone out of a clear sky, whether it came from the pure atmosphere of Holland or of old England itself. Colonies and patronage! If the people on the other side of the ocean had more faith in mother Nature, and less opinion of themselves, they would find it very tolerable breathing in the plantations. But the conceited rogues are like the man who blew the bellows, and fancied he made the music; and there is never a hobbling imp of them all, but he believes he is straighter and sounder than the best in the colonies. Here is our bay, now, as smooth as if it were shut in with twenty dykes, and the voyage will be as safe as if it were made on a canal."

"Dat werry well, if 'a do it," grumbled Cupid, who busied himself affectionately about the person of his master; "I t'ink it alway better to travel on 'e land, when a gentle'um owns so much as Massa Oloff. Der' war 'e time a ferry-boat go down, wid crowd of people; and nobody ever come up again to say how he feel."

"Here is some mistake," interrupted the Alderman, throwing an uneasy glance at his young friend. "I count four-and-fifty years and remember no such calamity."

"He'm werry sing'lar how a young folk do forget! 'Ere war drown six people in dat werry boat. A two Yankee, a Canada Frenchman, and a poor woman from a Jarseys. Eberybody war werry sorry for a poor woman from a Jarseys!"

"Thy tally is false, Master Cupid," promptly rejoined the Alderman, who was rather expert at figures. "Two Yankees, a Frenchman, and your Jersey woman, make but four."

"Well, den, I s'pose 'ere war one Yankee; but I know all were drown, for 'e gubnor lose he fine coach-horses in dat werry boat."

"The old fellow is right, sure enough; for I remember the calamity of the horses, as if it were but yesterday. But Death is monarch of the earth, and none of us may hope to escape his scythe when the appointed hour shall come! Here are no nags to lose to-day; and we may commence our voyage, Patroon, with cheerful faces and light hearts. Shall we proceed?"

Oloff Van Staats, or the Patroon of Kinderhook, as by the courtesy of the colony he was commonly termed, did not want for personal firmness. On the contrary, like most of those who were descended from the Hollanders, he was rather distinguished for steadiness in danger, and obstinacy in resistance. The little skirmish which had just taken place between his friend and his slave, had proceeded from their several apprehensions; the one feeling a sort of parental interest in his safety, and the other having particular reasons for wishing him to persevere in his intention to embark, instead of any justifiable cause in the character of the young proprietor himself. A sign to the boy who bore his portmanteau settled the controversy, when Mr. Van Staats intimated his readiness to move.

Cupid lingered on the stoop until his master had turned a corner; then, shaking his head with all the misgivings of an ignorant and superstitious mind, he drove the young fry of blacks, who thronged the door, into the house, closing all after him with scrupulous care. How far the presentiment of the black was warranted by the event will be seen in the course of the narrative.

The wide avenue in which Oloff Van Staats lived was but a few hundred yards in length. It terminated at one end with the fortress, and at the other it was crossed by a high stockade, which bore the name of the city walls; a defense that was provided against any sudden irruption of the Indians, who then hunted, and even dwelt in some numbers, in the lower counties of the colony.

It requires great familiarity with the growth of the town to recognize, in this description, the noble street that runs for a league through the center of the island. From this avenue which was then, as it is still, called the Broadway, our adventurers descended into a lower quarter of the town, holding free converse by the way.

"That Cupid is a negro to keep the roof on a house in its master's absence, Patroon," observed the Alderman, soon after they had left the stoop. "He looks like a padlock, and one might sleep without a dream with such a guardian near his dwelling. I wish I had brought the honest fellow the key of my stable."

"I have heard my father say that the keys of his own were always better under his own pillow," coolly replied the proprietor of a hundred thousand acres.

"Ah, the curse of Cain! It is useless to look for the fur of a martin on the back of a cat. But, Mr. Van Staats, while walking to your door this morning, it was my fortune to meet the late governor, who is permitted by his creditors to take the air at an hour when he thinks the eyes of the impertinent will be shut. I believe, Patroon, you were so lucky as to get back your moneys before the royal displeasure visited this man?"

"I was so lucky as never to trust him."

"That was better; still it would have been a barren investment—great jeopardy to principal, and no return. But we had discourses of various interests; and, among others, something was hazarded concerning your amatory pretensions to my niece."

"Neither the wishes of Oloff Van Staats nor the inclination of la belle Barberie, are a subject for the governor in council," said Patroon of Kinderhook, stiffly.

"Nor was it thus treated. The viscount spoke me fair, and had he not pushed the matter beyond discretion, we might have come to happier conclusions."

"I am glad there was some restraint in the discourse."

"The man exceeded reason, for he led the conference into personalities that no prudent man could relish. Still, he said that it was possible that the *Coquette* might yet be ordered for service among the islands!"

It has been said that Oloff Van Staats was a fair, personable young man of vast stature and with much the air of a gentleman of his country; for, though a British subject, he was rather a Hollander, in feelings, habits and opinions. He colored at the allusion to the presence of his known rival, though his companion was at loss to discover whether pride or vexation was at the bottom of his emotion.

"If Captain Ludlow prefers a cruise in the Indies to duty on this coast, I hope he may obtain his wish," was the cautious answer.

"Your liberal man enjoys a sounding name and an empty coffer," observed the Alderman dryly. "To me it seems that a petition to the admiral to send so meritorious an officer on service where he may distinguish himself, should deserve his thanks. The freebooters are playing the devil's game with the sugar trade, and even the French are getting troublesome farther south."

"He has certainly the reputation of an active cruiser."

"Blixum and philosophy! If you wish to succeed with Alida, Patroon, you must put more briskness into the adventure. The girl has a cross of the Frenchman in her temper, and none of your deliberations

and taciturnities will gain the day. The visit to the Lust in Rust is Cupid's own handiwork, and I hope to see you both return to town as amicable as the Stadtholder and the State General, after a sharp struggle for the year's subsidy has been settled by a compromise."

"The success of this suit is the affair nearest my—" The young man paused, as if surprised at his own communicativeness; and, taking advantage of the haste in which his toilet had been made, he thrust his hand into his vest, covering with his broad palm a portion of the human frame which poets do not describe as the seat of the passions.

"If you mean stomach, sir, you will not have reason to be disappointed," retorted the Alderman, a little more severely than was usual with one so cautious. "The heiress of Myndert Van Beverout will not be a penniless bride, and Monsieur Barberie did not close the books of life without taking good care of the balance-sheet — but yonder are those devils of ferrymen quitting the wharf without us! Scamper ahead, Brutus, and tell them to wait the legal minute. The rogues are never exact; sometimes starting before I am ready, and sometimes keeping me waiting in the sun, as if I were no better than a sunfish. Punctuality is the soul of business, and one of my habits does not like to be ahead nor behind time."

In this manner the worthy burgher, who would have been glad to regulate the movements of others, on all occasions, a good deal by his own, vented his complaints, while he and his companion hurried on to overtake the slowing-moving boat in which they were to embark. A brief description of the scene will not be without interest to a generation that may be termed modern in reference to the time of which we write.

A deep, narrow creek penetrated the island at this point, for the distance of a quarter of a mile. Each of its banks had a row of buildings, as the houses line a canal in the cities of Holland. As the course of the inlet was necessarily respected, the street had taken a curvature not unlike that of a new moon. The houses were ultra-Dutch, being low, angular, fastidiously neat, and all erected with gables to the street. Each had its ugly and inconvenient entrance, termed a stoop, its vane or weathercock, its dormer-windows, and its graduated battlement-walls. Near the apex of one of the latter, a little iron crane projected into the street. A small boat, of the same metal, swung from its end, a sign that the building to which it was appended was the ferry-house.

An inherent love of artificial and confined navigation had probably induced the burghers to select this spot as the place whence so many craft departed from the town; since it is certain that the two rivers could have furnished divers points more favorable for such an object, inasmuch as they possess the advantage of wide and unobstructed channels.

Fifty blacks were already in the street, dipping their brooms into the creek, and flourishing water over the sidewalks, and on the fronts of the low edifices. This light, but daily duty was relieved by clamorous collisions of wit, and by shouts of merriment, in which the whole street would join, as with one joyous and reckless movement of the spirit.

The language of this light-hearted and noisy race was Dutch, already corrupted by English idioms, and occasionally by English words; a system of change that has probably given rise to an opinion, among some of the descendants of the earlier colonists, that the latter tongue is merely a patois of the former. This opinion, which so much resembles that which certain well-read English scholars entertained of the plagiarisms of the continental writers, when they first began to dip into their works, is not strictly true; since the language of England has probably bestowed as much on the dialect of which we speak, as it has ever received from the purer scurces of the school of Holland. Here and there a grave burgher, still in his night-cap, might be seen with a head thrust out of an upper window, listening to these barbarisms of speech, and taking note of all the merry jibes that flew

from mouth to mouth, with an indomitable gravity that no levity of those beneath could undermine.

As the movement of the ferry-boat was necessarily slow, the Alderman and his companion were enabled to step into it before the fasts were thrown aboard. The periagua, as the craft was called, partook of a European and an American character. It possessed the length, narrowness and clean bow of the canoe, from which its name was derived, with the flat bottom and lee-boards of a boat constructed for the shallow waters of the Low Countries. Twenty years ago vessels of this description abounded in our rivers, and even now their two long and unsupported masts, and high narrow-headed sail, are daily seen bending like reeds to the breeze and dancing lightly over the billows of the bay.

There is a variety of the class of a size and pretension altogether superior to that just mentioned, which deserves a place among the most picturesque and striking boats float. He who has had occasion to navigate the southern shore of the Sound must have often seen the vessel to which we allude. It is distinguished by its great length, and masts which, naked of cordage, rise from the hull like two tall and faultless trees. When the eye runs over the daring height of the canvas, the noble confidence of the rig, and sees the comparatively vast machine handled with ease and grace by the dexterity of two fearless and expert mariners, it excites some such admiration as that which springs from the view of a severe temple of antiquity. The nakedness and simplicity of the construction, coupled with the boldness and rapidity of its movements, impart to the craft an air of grandeur that its ordinary uses would not give reason to expect.

Though, in some respects, of singular aquatic habits, the original colonists of New York were far less adventurous, as mariners, than their present descendants. A passage across the bay did not often occur in the tranquil lives of the burghers; and it is still within the memory of man, that a voyage between the two principal towns of the State was an event to excite the solicitude of friends, and the anxiety of the traveler. The perils of the Tappen Zee, as one of the wider reaches of the Hudson is still termed, were often dealt with by the good wives of the colony, in their relations of marvels; and she who had oftenest encountered them unharmed, was deemed a sort of marine amazon.

CHAPTER III.

"I have great comfort from this fellow; methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him: his complexion is perfect gallows."—TEMPEST.

IT has been said that the periagua was in motion before our two adventurers succeeded in stepping on board. The arrival of the Patroon of Kinderhook and of the Alderman Van Beverout was expected, and the skipper had taken his departure at the precise moment of the turn in the current, in order to show, with a sort of pretending independence which has a peculiar charm for men in his situation, that "Time and tide wait for no man." Still there were limits to his decision; for, while he put the boat in motion, especial care was taken that the circumstance should not subject a customer so important and constant as the Alderman, to any serious inconvenience. When he and his friend had embarked, the painters were thrown aboard, and the crew of the ferry-boat began to set their vessel, in earnest, toward the mouth of the creek. During these movements, a young negro was seated in the bow of the periagua, with his legs dangling one on each side of the cut-water, forming no bad apology for a figure-head. He held a conch to his mouth, and with his two glossy cheeks inflated like those of Æolus, and his dark, glittering eyes expressing the delight he found in drawing sounds from the shell, he continued to give forth the signal for departure.

"Put up the conch, thou bawler?" cried the Alderman, giving the yonker a rap on his naked poll, in passing, with the end of his cane, that might have disturbed the harmony of one less bent to clamor. "A

thousand windy trumpeters would be silence itself, compared to such a pair of lungs! How now, Master Skipper, is this your punctuality to start before your passengers are ready?"

The undisturbed boatman, without removing the pipe from his mouth, pointed to the bubbles on the water which were already floating outward, a certain evidence that the tide was on the ebb.

"I care nothing for your ins and outs, your ebbs and floods," returned the Alderman, in heat. "There is no better timepiece than the leg and eye of a punctual man. It is no more pleasant to go before one is ready, than to tarry when all business is done. Harkee, Master Skipper, you are not the only navigator in this bay, nor is your craft the swiftest that was ever launched. Have a care; though an acquiescing man by nature, I know how to encourage an opposition, when the public good seriously calls for my support."

To the attack on himself, the skipper was stoically indifferent, but to impeach the qualities of the periagua was to attack one who depended solely on his eloquence for vindication. Removing his pipe, therefore, he rejoined on the Alderman, with that sort of freedom that the sturdy Hollanders never failed to use to all offenders, regardless alike of rank or personal qualities.

"Der wind-gall and alderman," he growled, in the dialect of the country; "I should be glad to see the boat in York bay that can show the *Milkmaid* her stern! The Mayor and Councilmen had better order the tide to turn when they please; and then as each man will think of his own pleasure, a pretty set of whirl-pools they will give us in the harbor!"

The skipper, having delivered himself of his sentiments to this effect, resumed his pipe, like a man who felt he deserved the meed of victory, whether he were to receive it or not.

"It is useless to dispute with an obstinate man," muttered the Alderman, making his way through vegetable baskets, butter-tubs, and all the garniture of a market-boat, to the place occupied by his niece, in the stern sheets. "Good morrow to thee, Alida dear; early rising will make a flower-garden of thy cheeks, and the fresh air of the Lust in Rust will give even thy roses a deeper bloom."

The mollified burgher then saluted the cheek whose bloom had been deepened by his remark, with a warmth that showed he was not without natural affection; touched his hat in return for a low bow that he received from an aged white manservant, in a clean but ancient livery; and nodded to a young negress, whose second-hand finery sufficiently showed she was a personal attendant of the heiress.

A second glance at Alida de Barberie was scarcely necessary to betray her mixed descent. From her Norman father, a Huguenot of the petite noblesse, she had inherited her raven hair, the large, brilliant, coal-black eyes, in which wildness was singularly relieved by sweetness, a classical and faultless profile, and a form which was both taller and more flexible than commonly fell to the lot of the damsels of Holland. From her mother, la belle Barberie, as the maiden was often playfully turmed, had received a skin fair and spotless as the flower of France, and a bloom which rivaled the rich tints of an evening sky in her native land. Some of the embonpoint, for which the sister of the Alderman was a little remarkable, had descended also to her fairer daughter. In Alida, however, this peculiarity did not exceed the fullness which became her years, rounding her person and softening the outlines of her form, rather than diminishing its ease and grace. These personal advantages were embellished by a neat but modest traveling habit, a little beaver that was shaded by a cluster of drooping feathers, and a mien that, under the embarrassment of her situation, preserved the happiest medium between modesty and perfect self-possession.

When Alderman Van Beverout joined this fair creature, in whose future happiness he was fully justified in taking the deep interest which he has betrayed in some of the opening scenes of this volume, he found her engaged in a courteous discourse with the young man, who was gen-

erally considered as the one, among the numerous pretenders to her favor, who was most likely to succeed. Had other cause been wanting, this sight alone would have been sufficient to restore his good humor; and, making a place for himself, by quietly dispossessing Francois, the domestic of his niece, the persevering burgher endeavored to encourage an intercourse that he had reason to think must terminate in the result he both meditated and desired.

In the present effort, however, the Alderman failed. There is a feeling which universally pervades among landsmen and landswomen, when they first embark on an element to which they are strangers, that ordinarily shuts their mouths and renders them meditative. In the older and more observant travelers, it is observation and comparison; while with the younger and more susceptible, it is very apt to take the character of sentiment. Without stopping to analyze the cause or the consequences, in the instance of the Patroon and la belle Barberie, it will be sufficient to state, that in spite of all the efforts of the worthy burgher, who had navigated the sluggish creek too often to be the subject of any new emotions, his youthful companions gradually grew silent and thoughtful. Though a celibate in his own person, Myndert had not now to learn that the infant god as often does his mischief through this quiet agency as in any other manner. He became, therefore, mute in his turn, watching the slow movement of the periagua with as much assiduity as if he saw his own image on the water.

A quarter of an hour of this characteristic, and it is to be inferred, agreeable navigation, brought the boat to the mouth of the inlet. Here a powerful effort forced her into the tide's-way, and she might be said to put forth on her voyage. But while the black crew were trimming the sails, and making the other necessary preparations for departure, a voice was heard hailing them from the shore, with an order rather than a request, that they would stay their movements.

"Hilloa, the periagua!" it cried. "Haul over your head-sheet, and jam the tiller down into the lap of that comfortable-looking old gentleman. Come; bear a hand, my hummers! or your horse-race of a craft will get the bit into its mouth, and run away with you."

This summons produced a pause in the movements of the crew. After regarding each other, in surprise and admiration, the watermen drew the head-sheets over, put the helm a-lee, without, however, invading the lap of the Alderman, and the boat became stationary, at the distance of a few rods from the shore. While a new passenger was preparing to come off in a yawl, those who awaited his movements had leisure to examine his appearance, and to form their different surmises concerning his character.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the stranger was a son of the ocean. He was of a firmly knit and active frame, standing exactly six feet in his stockings. The shoulders, though square, were compact, the chest full and high, the limbs round, neat and muscular—the whole indicating a form in which strength and activity were apportioned with the greatest accuracy. A small bullet head was set firmly on its broad foundation, and it was thickly covered with a mass of brown hair that was already a little grizzled. The face was that of a man of thirty, and it was worthy of the frame, being manly, bold, decided, and rather handsome; though it expressed little more than high daring, perfect coolness, some obstinacy, and a certain degree of contempt for others, that its owner did not always take the trouble to conceal. The color was a rich, deep, and uniform red such as much exposure is apt to give to men whose complexions are by nature light and florid.

The dress of this stranger was quite as remarkable as his person. He wore a short pea-jacket, cut tight and tastefully; a little, low and rakish cap, and full, bell-mouthed trousers, all in a spotlessly white duck; a material well adapted to the season and climate. The first was made without buttons, affording an apology for the use of the rich Indian shawl, that belted his body and kept the garment

tight to his frame. Faultlessly clean linen appeared through the opening above, and a collar of the same material fell over the gay bandanna, which was thrown, with a single careless turn, around his throat. The latter was a manufacture then little known in Europe, and its use was almost entirely confined to seamen of the long voyage. One of its ends was suffered to blow about in the wind, but the other was brought down with care over the chest, where it was confined, by springing the blade of a small knife with an ivory handle, in a manner to confine the silk to the linen; a sort of breast-pin that is even now much used by mariners. If we add that light canvas slippers, with foul anchors worked in worsteds upon their insteps, covered his feet, we shall say all that is necessary of his attire.

The appearance of one of the air and dress we have just described, excited a strong sensation among the blacks who scrubbed the stoops and pavements. He was closely attended to the place where he hailed the periagua, by four or five loungers, who studied his manner and movements with the admiration that men of their class seldom fail to bestow on those who bear about them the evidence of having passed lives of adventure, and perhaps of hardship and daring. Beckoning to one of these idlers to follow him, the hero of the India-shawl stepped into an empty boat, and casting loose its fast, he sculled the light yawl toward the craft which was awaiting his arrival. There was, in truth, something in the reckless air, the decision, and the manly attitudes of so fine a specimen of a seaman, that might have attracted notice from those who were more practiced in the world than the little crowd of admirers he left behind him. With an easy play of wrist and elbow, he caused the yawl to glide ahead like some indolent marine animal swimming through its element, and as he stood, firm as a planted statue, with a foot on each gunwale, there was much of that confidence created by his steadiness, that one acquires by viewing the repeated and successful efforts of a skillful rope-dancer. When the yawl reached the side of the periagua, he dropped a small Spanish coin into the open palm of the negro, and sprang on the side of the latter, with an exertion of muscle that sent the little boat he quitted half-way toward the shore, leaving the frightened black to steady himself in his rocking tenement, in the best manner he could.

The tread and posture of the stranger, when he gained the half-deck of the periagua, were finely nautical, and confident to audacity. He seemed to analyze the half-maritime character of the crew and passengers at a glance, and to feel that sort of superiority over his companions which men of his profession were then a little too wont to entertain toward those whose ambition could be bounded by *terra firma*. His eye turned upward at the simple rig and modest sails of the periagua, while his upper lip curled with the knowing expression of a critic. Then kicking the fore-sheet clear of its cleat, and suffering the sail to fill, he stepped from one butter-tub to another, making a stepping-stone of the lap of a countryman by the way, and alighted in the stern-sheets, in the midst of the party of Alderman Van Beverout, with the agility and fearlessness of a feathered Mercury. With a coolness that did infinite credit to his powers for commanding, his next act was to dispossess the amazed skipper of the helm, taking the tiller into his own hands with as much composure as if he were the everyday occupant of the post. When he saw that the boat was beginning to move through the water, he found leisure to bestow some observation on his fellow-voyagers. The first that met his bold and reckless eye was Francois, the domestic of Alida.

"If it come to blow in squalls, commodore," observed the intruder, with a gravity that half deceived the attentive Frenchman, while he pointed to the bag in which the latter wore his hair, "you'll be troubled to carry your broad pennant. But so experienced an officer has not put to sea without having a storm cue in readiness for foul weather."

The valet did not, or affected not to un-

derstand the allusion, maintaining an air of dignified but silent superiority.

"The gentleman is in a foreign service, and does not understand an English mariner! The worst that can come, after all, to too much top-hamper, is to cut away, and let it drift with the scud. May I make bold to ask, judge, if the courts have done anything of late concerning the freebooters among the Islands?"

"I have not the honor to bear her Majesty's commission," coldly returned Van Staats of Kinderhook, to whom this question had been hardly put.

"The best navigator is sometimes puzzled by a hazy observation, and many an old seaman has taken fog bank for solid ground. Since you are not in the courts, sir, I wish you joy; for it is running among shoals to be cruising there, whether as judge or suitor. One is never fairly snug and land-locked while in company of a lawyer, and yet the devil himself cannot always give the sharks a good offing. A pretty sheet of water, friends; and one as snug as rotten cables and foul winds can render desirable, is this bay of York."

"You are a mariner of the long voyage," returned the Patroon, unwilling that Alida should not believe him equal to bandying wits with the stranger.

"Long or short; Calcutta or Cape Cod; dead-reckoning, eye-sight, or star-gazing: all's one to your real dolphin. The shape of the coast, between Fundy and the Horn, is as familiar to my eye as an admirer to this pretty young lady; and as to the other shore, I have run it down oftener than the commodore here has ever set his pennant, blow high or blow low. A cruise like this is a Sunday in my navigation; though I dare say you took leave of the wife, blessed the children, over-hauled the will, and sent to ask a good word from the priest, before you came abroad!"

"Had these ceremonies been observed, the danger would not have been increased," said the young Patroon, anxious to steal a glance at la belle Barberie, though his timidity caused him, in truth, to look the other way. "One is never nearer danger, for being prepared to meet it."

"True; we must all die when the reckoning is out. Hang or drown—gibbet or bullet clears the world of a great deal of rubbish, or the decks would get to be so littered that the vessel could not be worked. The last cruise is the longest of all; and honest papers, with a clean bill of health, may help a man into port when he is past keeping the open sea. How now, skipper! what lies are floating about the docks this morning? when did the last Albanyman get his tub down the river? or whose gelding has been ridden to death in chase of a witch?"

"The devil's babes!" muttered the Alderman; "there's no want of roysterers to torment such innocents!"

"Have the buccaneers taken to praying, or does their trade thrive in this heel of the war?" continued the mariner of the India-shawl, disregarding the complaint of the burgher. "The times are getting heavy for men of metal, as may be seen by the manner in which yon cruiser wears out her ground-tackle, instead of trying the open sea. May I spring every spar I carry, but I would have the boat out, and give her an airing before to-morrow, if the Queen would condescend to put your humble servant in charge of the craft! The man lies there at his anchors as if he had a good freight of real Hollands in his hold, and was waiting for a few bales of beaver-skins to barter for his strong waters."

As the stranger coolly expressed his opinion of her Majesty's ship *Coquette*, he rolled his glance over the persons of his companions, suffering it to rest for a moment, with a secret significance, on the steady eye of the burgher.

"Well," he continued, "the sloop answers for a floating vane to tell which way the tide is running, if she does nothing better; and that must be a great assistance, skipper, in the navigation of one who keeps as bright a lookout on the manner in which the world whirls round as a gentleman of your sagacity."

"If the news in the creek be true," rejoined the unoffended owner of the peria-

gua, "there will be other business for Captain Ludlow and the *Coquette* before many days!"

"Ah! having eaten all his meat and bread, the man will be obliged to victual his ship anew. 'Twere a pity so active a gentleman should keep a fast in a brisk tide's-way. And when his coppers are once more filled, and the dinner is fairly eaten, what dost think will be his next duty?"

"There is a report among the boatmen of the South Bay that something was seen yester'night off the outer side of Long Island!"

"I'll answer for the truth of that rumor, for having come up with the evening flood, I saw it myself."

"Der duyvel's luck! and what dost take it to be?"

"The Atlantic Ocean; if you doubt my word, I appeal to this well ballasted old gentleman, who, being a school-master, is able to give you latitude and longitude for its truth."

"I am Alderman Van Beverout," muttered the object of this new attack between the teeth, though apparently but half-disposed to notice one who set so little bounds to his discourse.

"I beg a thousand pardons!" returned the strange seaman, with a grave inclination of his body. "The stolidity of your worship's countenance deceived me. It may be, indeed, unreasonable to expect any alderman to know the position of the Atlantic Ocean! And yet, gentlemen, on the honor of a man who has seen much salt water in his time, I do assure you the sea I speak of is actually there. If there be anything on it, or in it, that should not be in reason, this worthy commander of the periagua will let us know the rest."

"A wood-boat from the inlet says the Skimmer of the Seas was lately seen standing along the coast," returned the ferryman, in the tone of one who is certain of delivering matter of general interest.

"Your true sea-dog, who runs in and out of inlets, is a man for marvels," coolly observed the stranger. "They know the color of the sea at night, and are forever steering in the wind's eye in search of adventures. I wonder more of them are not kept at making almanacs! There was a mistake concerning a thunder-storm in the last one I bought, and all for the want of proper science. And pray, friend, who is this Skimmer of the Seas, that is said to be running after his needle, like a tailor who has found a hole in his neighbor's coat?"

"The witches may tell! I only know that such a rover there is, and that he is here to-day, and there to-morrow. Some say it is only a craft of mist that skims the top of the seas like sailing water-fowl; and others think it is the sprite of a vessel that was rifled and burned by Kidd in the Indian Ocean, looking for its gold and the killed. I saw him once myself, but the distance was so great, and his maneuvers were so unnatural, that I could hardly give a good account of his hull or rig."

"This is matter that don't get into the log every watch! Where-away, or in what seas didst meet the thing?"

"'Twas off the Branch. We were fishing in thick weather, and when the mist lifted a little, there was a craft seen standing in shore, running like a race-horse; but while we got our anchor, she had made a league of offing on the other tack!"

"A certain proof of either her or your activity! But what might have been the form and shape of your fly-away?"

"Nothing determined. To one she seemed a full-rigged and booming ship; another took her for a Bermudian scudder; while to me she had the look of twenty periaguas built into a single craft. It is well known, however, that a West-Indiaman went to sea that night, and though it is now three years, no tidings of her crew have ever come to any in New York. I have never gone upon the banks to fish since that day in thick weather."

"You have done well," observed the stranger. "I have seen many wonderful sights myself on the rolling ocean; and he whose business it is to lay between wind and water like you, my friend, should never trust himself within reach of one of those devil's flyers. I could tell you a tale of an affair in the calm latitudes,

under the burning sun, that would be a lesson to all of overbold curiosity! Commission and character are not affairs for your in-shore coasters."

"We have time to hear it," observed the Patroon, whose attention had been excited by the discourse, and who read in the dark eye of Alida that she felt an interest in the expected narrative.

But the countenance of the stranger suddenly grew serious. He shook his head like one who had sufficient reasons for his silence; and relinquishing the tiller, he quite coolly obliged a gaping countryman in the center of the boat to yield his place, where he laid his own athletic form at full length, folded his arms on his breast, and shut his eyes. In less than five minutes all within hearing had audible evidence that this extraordinary son of the ocean was in a sound sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

"Be patient, for the prize I'll bring thee to,
Shall hoodwink this mischance."—TEMPEST.

THE air, audacity, and language of the unknown mariner had produced a marked sensation among the passengers of the periagua. It was plain by the playfulness that lurked about the coal-black eye of the belle Barberie, that she had been amused by his sarcasms, though the boldness of his manner had caused her to maintain the reserve which she believed necessary to her sex and condition. The Patroon studied the countenance of his mistress, and though half offended by the freedom of the intruder, he had believed it wisest to tolerate his liberties, as the natural excesses of a spirit that had been lately released from the monotony of a sea-life. The repose which usually reigned in the countenance of the Alderman had been a little troubled; but he succeeded in concealing his discontent from any impertinent observation. When the chief actor in the foregoing scene, therefore, saw fit to withdraw, the usual tranquillity was restored, and his presence appeared to be forgotten.

An ebbing tide and a freshening breeze quickly carried the periagua past the smaller islands of the bay, and brought the cruiser called the *Coquette* more distinctly into view. This vessel, a ship of twenty guns, lay abreast of the hamlet on the shores of Staten Island, which was the destination of the ferry-boat. Here was the usual anchorage of outward bound ships which awaited a change of wind; and it was here that vessels then, as in our times, were subjected to those examinations and delays which are imposed for the safety of the inhabitants of the city. The *Coquette* was alone, however; for the arrival of a trader from a distant port was an event of unfrequent occurrence at the commencement of the eighteenth century.

The course of the periagua brought her within fifty feet of the sloop-of-war. As the former approached, a movement of curiosity and interest occurred among those she contained.

"Take more room for your *Milkmaid*," grumbled the Alderman, observing that the skipper was willing to gratify his passengers by running as near as possible to the dark side of the cruiser. "Seas and oceans! is not York Bay wide enough that you must brush the dust out of the muzzles of the guns of yon lazy ship? If the Queen knew how her money was eaten and drunk by the idle knaves aboard her, she would send them all to hunt for freebooters among the islands. Look at the land, Alida, child, and you'll think no more of the fright the gaping dunce is giving thee; he only wishes to show his skill in steering."

But the niece manifested none of the terror that the uncle was willing to ascribe to her fears. Instead of turning pale, the color deepened on her cheeks as the periagua came dancing along under the lee of the cruiser, and if her respiration became quicker than usual, it was scarcely produced by the agitation of alarm. The near sight of the tall masts, and of the maze of cordage that hung nearly above their heads, however, prevented the change from being noted. A hundred curious eyes were already peeping at them through the ports or over the

bulwarks of the ship, when suddenly an officer, who wore the undress of a naval captain of that day, sprang into the main rigging of the cruiser, and saluted the party in the periagua by waving his hat hurriedly, like one who was agreeably taken by surprise.

"A fair sky and gentle breeze to each and all!" he cried, with the hearty manner of a seaman. "I kiss my hand to the fair Alida; and the Alderman will take a sailor's good wishes; Mr. Van Staats, I salute you."

"Aye," muttered the burgher, "your idlers have nothing better to do than to make words answer for deeds. A lazy war and a distant enemy make you seamen the lords of the land, Captain Ludlow."

Alida blushed still deeper, hesitated, and then, by a movement that was half involuntary, she waved her handkerchief. The young Patroon arose, and answered the salutation by a courteous bow. By this time the ferry-boat was nearly past the ship, and the scowl was quitting the face of the Alderman, when the mariner of the India-shawl sprang to his feet, and in a moment he stood again in the center of the party.

"A pretty sea-boat, and a neat show aloft!" he said, as his understanding eye scanned the rigging of the royal cruiser, taking the tiller at the same time, with all his former indifference, from the hands of the skipper. "Her Majesty should have good service from such a racer, and no doubt the youth in her rigging is a man to get the most out of his craft. We'll take another observation. Draw away your head-sheets, boy."

The stranger put the helm a-lee while speaking, and by the time the order he had given was uttered, the quick-working boat was about and nearly filled on the other tack. In another minute she was again brushing along the side of the sloop-of-war. A common complaint against this hardy interference with the regular duty of the boat was about to break out of the lips of the Alderman and the skipper, when he of the India-shawl lifted his cap and addressed the officer in the rigging with all the self-possession he had manifested in the intercourse with those nearer his person.

"Has her Majesty need of a man in her service who has seen, in his time, more blue water than hard ground; or is there no empty berth, in so gallant a cruiser, for one who must do a seaman's duty or starve?"

The descendant of the king-hating Ludlows, as the Lord Cornbury had styled the race of the commander of the *Coquette*, was quite as much surprised by the appearance of him who put this question as he was by the coolness with which a mariner of ordinary condition presumed to address an officer who bore so high a commission as his own. He had, however, sufficient time to recollect in whose presence he stood, ere he replied, for the stranger had again placed the helm a-lee, and caused the foresail to be thrown back —a change that made the periagua stationary.

"The Queen will always receive a bold mariner in her pay, if he come prepared to serve with skill and fidelity," he said, "as a proof of which, let a rope be thrown the periagua; we shall treat more at our ease under her Majesty's pennant. I shall be proud to entertain Alderman Van Beverout in the meantime; and a cutter will always be at his command when he shall have occasion to quit us."

"Your land-loving aldermen find their way from a queen's cruiser to the shore more easily than a seaman of twenty years' experience," returned the other, without giving the burgher time to express his thanks for the polite offer of the other. "You have gone through the Gibraltar passage, without doubt, noble Captain, being a gentleman that has got so fine a boat under his orders?"

"Duty has taken me into the Italian seas more than once," answered Ludlow, half disposed to resent his familiarity, though anxious to keep the periagua near, to quarrel with him who so evidently had produced the unexpected pleasure.

"Then you know that, though a lady might fan a ship through the straits eastward, it needs a Levant-breeze to bring her out again. Her Majesty's pennants

are long, and when they get foul around the limbs of a thoroughly-bred sea-dog, it passes all his art to clear the jam. It is most worthy of remark, that the better the seaman, the less his power to cast loose the knot!"

"If the pennant be so long, it may reach farther than you wish! But a bold volunteer has no occasion to dread a press."

"I fear the berth I wish is filled," returned the other, curling his lip; "let draw the fore-sheet, lad; we will take our departure, leaving the fly of the pennant well under our lee. Adieu, brave Captain; when you have need of a thorough rover and dream of stern-chases and wet sails, think of him who visited your ship at her lazy moorings."

Ludlow bit his lips, and though his fine face reddened to the temples, he met the arch glances of Alida, and laughed. But he who had so hardily braved the resentment of a man powerful as the commander of a royal cruiser in a British colony, appeared to understand the hazard of his situation.

The periagua whirled round on her heel, and the next minute it was bending to the breeze, and dashing through the little waves toward the shore. Three boats left the cruiser at the same moment. One, which evidently contained her captain, advanced with the usual dignified movement of a barge landing an officer of rank, but the others were urged ahead with all the earnestness of a hot chase.

"Unless disposed to serve the Queen, you have not done well, my friend, to brave one of her commanders at the muzzles of his guns," observed the Patroon so soon as the state of the case became too evident to doubt the intentions of the man-of-war's men.

"That Captain Ludlow would gladly take some of us out of this boat, by fair means or by foul, is a fact clear as a bright star in a cloudless night, and well-knowing a seaman's duty to his superiors, I shall leave him to his choice."

"In which case you will shortly eat her Majesty's bread," pithily returned the Alderman.

"The food is unpalatable, and I reject it; yet here is a boat whose crews seem determined to make one swallow worse fare."

The unknown mariner ceased speaking, for the situation of the periagua was truly getting to be a little critical. At least so it seemed to the less-instructed landsmen who were witnesses of this unexpected rencontre. As the ferry-boat had drawn in with the island, the wind hauled up through the pass which communicates with the outer bay, and it became necessary to heave about twice, in order to fetch to windward of the usual landing-place. The first of these maneuvers had been executed, and as it necessarily changed their course, the passengers saw that the cutter to which the stranger alluded was enabled to get within-shore of them, or nearer to the wharf where they ought to land than they were themselves. Instead of suffering himself to be led off by a pursuit that he knew might easily be rendered useless, the officer who commanded this boat cheered his men, and pulled swiftly to the point of debarkation. On the other hand a second cutter, which had already reached the line of the periagua's course, lay on its oars and awaited its approach. The unknown mariner manifested no intention to avoid the interview. He still held the tiller and as effectually commanded the little vessel as if his authority were of a more regular character. The audacity and decision of his air and conduct, aided by the consummate manner in which he worked the boat, might alone have achieved this momentary usurpation, had not the general feeling against impressment been so much in his favor.

"The devil's fangs!" grumbled the skipper. "If you should keep the *Milk-maid* away, we shall lose a little in distance, though I think the man-of-war's men will be puzzled to catch her, with a flowing sheet!"

"The Queen has sent a message by the gentleman," the mariner rejoined; "it would be unmannerly to refuse to hear it!"

"Heave-to the periagua!" shouted

the young officer in the cutter. "In her Majesty's name, I command you, obey."

"God bless the royal lady!" returned he of the foul anchors and gay shawl, while the swift ferry-boat continued to dash ahead. "We owe her duty, and are glad to see so proper a gentleman employed in her behalf."

By this time the boats were fifty feet asunder. No sooner was there room, than the periagua once more flew round and commenced anew its course, dashing in again toward the shore. It was necessary, however, to venture within an oar's length of the cutter, or to keep away—a loss of ground to which he who controlled her movements showed no disposition to submit. The officer arose, and, as the periagua drew near, it was evident his hand held a pistol, though he seemed reluctant to exhibit the weapon. The mariner stepped aside in a manner to offer a full view of all his group, as he sarcastically observed:

"Choose your object, sir; in such a party a man of sentiment may have a preference."

The young man colored, as much with shame at the degrading duty he had been commissioned to perform, as with vexation at his failure.

Recovering his self-composure, however, he lifted his hat to la belle Barberie, and the periagua dashed on in triumph. Still the leading cutter was near the shore, where it soon arrived, the crew lying on their oars near the wharf, in expectation of the arrival of the ferry-boat. At this sight the skipper shook his head, and looked up into the bold face of his passenger, in a manner to betray how much his mind misgave the result. But the tall mariner maintained his coolness, and began to make merry allusions to the service he had braved with so much temerity, and from which no one believed he was yet likely to escape. By the former maneuvers the periagua had gained a position well to windward of the wharf, and she now steered close upon the wind, directly for the shore. Against the consequences of a perseverance in this course, however, the skipper saw fit to remonstrate.

"Shipwrecks and rocky bottoms!" exclaimed the alarmed waterman. "A Holland galiot would go to pieces, if you should run her in among those stepping-stones with this breeze. No honest boatman loves to see a man stowed in a cruiser's hold, like a thief caged in a prison; but when it comes to breaking the nose of the *Milkmaid*, it is asking too much of her owner to stand by and look on."

"There shall not be a dimple in her lovely countenance deranged," answered his cool passenger. "Now lower away your sails, and we'll run along the shore, down to yon wharf. 'Twould be an ungallant act to treat the dairy-girl with so little ceremony, gentlemen, after the little lively foot and quick evolutions she has shown in our behalf. The best dancer in the island could not have better played her part though jigging under the music of a three-stringed fiddle."

By this time the sails were lowered, and the periagua was gliding down toward the place of landing, running always at the distance of fifty feet from the shore.

"Every craft has its allotted time, like a mortal," continued the inexplicable mariner of the India-shawl. "If she is to die a sudden death, there is your beam-end and stern-way, which takes her into the grave without funeral service or parish prayers; your dropsy is being water-logged; gout and rheumatism kill like a broken back and loose joints; indigestion is a shifting cargo, with guns adrift; the gallows is a bottomry-bond, with lawyers' fees; while fire, drowning, death by religious melancholy, and suicide, are a careless gunner, sunken rocks, false lights, and a lubberly captain."

Ere any were apprised of his intention, this singular being then sprang from the boat on the cap of the little rock, over which the waves were washing, whence he bounded from stone to stone, by vigorous efforts, till he fairly leaped to land. In another minute he was lost to view among the dwellings of the hamlet.

The arrival of the periagua, which im-

mediately after reached the wharf, the disappointment of the cutter's crew, and the return of both the boats to their ship, succeeded as matters of course.

CHAPTER V.

"*Oliv.*—Did he write this?
Clo.—Aye, madam."—TWELFTH NIGHT.

IF we say that Alida de Barberie did not cast a glance behind her as the party quitted the wharf, in order to see whether the boat that contained the commander of the cruiser followed the example of the others, we shall probably portray the maiden as one that was less subject to the influence of coquetry than the truth would justify. To the great discontent of the Alderman, whatever might have been the feelings of hisniece on the occasion, the barge continued to approach the shore, in a manner which showed that the young seaman betrayed no visible interest in the result of the chase.

The heights of Staten Island, a century ago, were covered, much as they are at present, with a growth of dwarf-trees. Foot-paths led among this meager vegetation in divers directions; and as the hamlet at the quarantine-ground was the point whence they all diverged, it required a practiced guide to thread their mazes without a loss of both time and distance. It would seem, however, that the worthy burgher was fully equal to the office; for, moving with more than his usual agility, he soon led his companions into the wood, and, by frequently altering his course, so completely confounded their sense of the relative bearings of places, that it is not probable one of them all could very readily have extricated himself from the labyrinth.

"Clouds and shady bowers!" exclaimed Myndert, when he had achieved, to his own satisfaction, this evasion of the pursuit he wished to avoid; "little oaks and green pines are pleasant on a June morning. You shall have mountain air and a sea-breeze, Patroon, to quicken the appetite of the Lust in Rust. If Alida will speak, the girl can say that a mouthful of the elixir is better for a rosy cheek than all the concoctions and washes that were ever invented to give a man the heart-ache."

"If the place be as much changed as the road that leads to it," returned la belle Barberie, glancing her dark eye, in vain, in the direction of the bay they had quitted, "I should scarcely venture an opinion on a subject of which I am obliged to confess utter ignorance."

"Ah, woman is naught but vanities! To see and to be seen is the delight of the sex. Though we are a thousand times more comfortable in this wood than we should be in walking along the water-side, why, the sea-gulls and snipes lose the benefit of our company! The salt-water, and all who live on it, are to be avoided by a wise man, Mr. Van Staats, except as they both serve to cheapen freight and to render trade brisk. You'll thank me for this care, niece of mine, when you reach the bluff, cool as a package of furs free from moth, and fresh and beautiful as a Holland tulip, with the dew on it."

"To resemble the latter, one might consent to walk blindfold, dearest uncle; and so we dismiss the subject. Francois, fais moi le plaisir de porter ce petit livre; malgre la fraicheur de la foret, j'ai besoin de m'evanter."

The valet took the book with an empressement that defeated the more tardy politeness of the Patroon; and when he saw, by the vexed eye and flushed cheek of his young mistress, that she was incommoded rather by an internal than by the external heat, he whispered considerately—

"Que ma chere Mademoiselle Alide ne se fache pas! Elle ne manquerait jamais d'admirateurs, dans un desert. Ah! si Mam'selle allait voir la patrie de ses ancestres!"

"Merci bien, mon cher; gardez les feuilles fortement fermees. Il y a des papiers dedans."

"Monsieur Francois," said the Alderman, separating his niece with little ceremony from her nearly parental attendant by the interposition of his own bulky person and motioning for the others to pro-

ceed, "a word with thee in confidence. I have noted, in the course of a busy and I hope a profitable life, that a faithful servant is an honest counselor. Next to Holland and England, both of which are great commercial nations, and the Indies, which are necessary to these colonies, together with a natural preference for the land in which I was born, I have always been of opinion that France is a very good sort of country. I think, Mr. Francois, that dislike to the seas has kept you from returning thither since the decease of my late brother-in-law!"

"Wid like for Mam'selle Alide, Monsieur, avec votre permission."

"Your affection for my niece, honest Francois, is not to be doubted. It is as certain as the payment of a good draft by Crommeline, Van Stopper, and Van Gelt, of Amsterdam. Ah! old valet! she is fresh and blooming as a rose, and a girl of excellent qualities! 'Tis a pity that she is a little opinionated; a defect that she doubtless inherits from her Norman ancestors: since all of my family have ever been remarkable for listening to reason. The Normans were an obstinate race as witness the siege of Rochelle, by which oversight real estate in that city must have lost much in value!"

"Mille excuses, Monsieur Bevre'; more beautiful as de rose, and no opiniatre du tout. Mon Dieu, pour sa qualite, c'est une famille tres ancienne."

"That was a weak point with my brother Barberie, and, after all, it did not add a cipher to the sum total of the assets. The best blood, Mr. Francois, is that which has been best fed. The line of Hugh Capet himself would fail, without the butcher; and the butcher would certainly fail, without customers that can pay. Francois, thou art a man who understands the value of a sure footing in the world; would it not be a thousand pities that such a girl as Alida should throw herself away on one whose best foundation is no better than a rolling ship?"

"Certainement, Monsieur: Mam'selle be too good to roll in de ship."

"Obliged to follow a husband up and down; among freebooters and dishonest traders; in fair weather and foul; hot and cold; wet and dry; bilge water and salt water; cramps and nausea; salt junk and no junk; gales and calms—and all for a hasty judgment formed in sanguine youth."

The face of the valet had responded to the Alderman's enumeration of the evils that would attend so ill-judged a step in his niece, as faithfully as if each muscle had been a mirror to reflect the contortions of one suffering under the malady of the sea.

"Parbleu, c'est horrible, cette mer!" he ejaculated, when the other had done. "It is a grand malheur, dere should be watair but for drink, and for la proprete avec fosse to keep de carp round de chateau. Mais, Mam'selle be no haste judgment, and she shall have mari on la terre solide."

"'Twould be better that the estate of my brother-in-law should be kept in sight, judicious Francois, than to be sent adrift on the high seas."

"Dere vas marin dans la famille de Barberie, nevair."

"Bonds and balances! If the savings of one I could name, frugal Francois, were added in current coin, the sum total would sink a common ship. You know it is my intention to remember Alida, in settling accounts with the world."

"If Monsieur de Barberie vas 'live, Monsieur Alderman, he should say des choses convenables; mais, malheureusement, mon cher maitre est mort; and, saair, I shall be bold to remercier pour lui, et pour tout sa famille."

"Women are perverse, and sometimes they have pleasure in doing the very thing they are desired not to do."

"Ma foi, oui!"

"Prudent men should manage them with soft words and rich gifts; with these they become orderly as a pair of well-broke geldings."

"Monsieur, know," said the old valet, rubbing his hands and laughing with the subdued voice of a well-bred domestic, though he could not conceal a jocular wink; "pourtant il est garcon? Le ca-

deau be good for de demoiselles, and bettair as for de dames."

"Wedlock and blinkers! it is we gassons, as you call us, who ought to know. Your henpecked husband has no time to generalize among the sex, in order to understand the real quality of the article. Now, here is Van Staats of Kinderhook, faithful Francois; what think you of such a youth for a husband for Alida?"

"Pourtant, Mam'selle like de vivacite; Monsieur le Patroon be nevair trop vif."

"The more likely to be sure—hist! I hear a footstep. We are followed—chased, perhaps I should say, to speak in the language of these sea gentry. Now is the time to show this Captain Ludlow how a Frenchman can wind him round his finger on *terra firma*. Loiter in the rear, and draw our navigator on the wrong course. When he has run into a fog, come yourself with all speed to the oak on the bluff. There we shall await you."

Flattered by this confidence, and really persuaded that he was furthering the happiness of her he served, the old valet nodded in reply to the Alderman's wink and chuckle, and immediately relaxed his speed. The former pushed ahead; and in a minute he and those who followed had turned short to the left, and were out of sight.

Though faithfully and even affectionately attached to Alida, her servant had many of the qualifications of a European domestic. Trained in all the ruses of his profession, he was of that school which believes civilization is to be measured by artifice; and success lost some of its value when it had been effected by the vulgar machinery of truth and common sense. No wonder then the retainer entered into the views of the Alderman with more than a usual relish for the duty. He heard the crackling of the dried twigs beneath the footsteps of him who followed; and, in order that there might be no chance of missing the desired interview, the valet began to hum a French air in so loud a key as to be certain the sounds would reach any ear that was nigh. The twigs snapped more rapidly, the footsteps seemed nearer, and the hero of the India-shawl sprang to the side of the expecting Francois.

The disappointment seemed mutual, and on the part of the domestic it entirely disconcerted all his prearranged schemes for misleading the commander of the *Coquette*. Not so with the bold mariner. So far from his self-possession being disturbed, it would have been no easy matter to restrain his audacity, even in situations far more trying than any in which he has yet been presented to the reader.

"What cheer in thy woodland cruise, Monsieur Broadpennant?" he said, with infinite coolness, the instant his steady glance had ascertained they were all alone. "This is safer navigation for an officer of thy draught of water, than running about the bay in a periagua. What may be your longitude, and where-away did you part company from the consorts?"

"Sair, I valk in de vood for de plaisir, and I go on de bay for de—parbleu, non! 'tis to follow ma jeune maitresse I go on de bay; and, sair, I wish de who do love de bay and de sea, would not come into de vood, du tout."

"Well spoken, and with ample spirit; what, a student, too! One in a wood should glean something from his labors. Is it the art of furling a main cue that is taught in this pretty volume?"

As the mariner put his question, he very deliberately took the book from Francois, who, instead of resenting the liberty, rather offered the volume in exultation.

"No, sair, it is not how to furl la cue, but how to touch de soul; not de art to haul over de calm, but—oui, c'est plein de connaissance et d'esprit! Ah! ah! you know de Cid! le grand homme! l'homme de genie! If you read, Monsieur Marin, you shall see la vraie poesie! Not de big book and no single rhyme; sair, I do not vish to say vat is penible, mais it is not one book widout rhyme; it was not ecrit on the sea. Le diable! que le vrai genie, et le les nobles sentiments, se trouvent dans ce livre, la!"

"Aye, I see it is a log-book for every man to note his mind in. I return you Master Cid, with his fine sentiments in

the bargain. Great as was his genius, it would seem he was not the man to write all that I find between the leaves."

"He not write him all! Yes, sair, he shall writ him six time more dan all, if la France a besoin. Que l'envie de ces Anglais se decouvre quand on parle des beaux genies de la France!"

"I will only say, if the gentleman wrote the whole that is in the book, and it is as fine as you would make a plain, seafaring man believe, he did wrong not to print it."

"Print!" echoed Francois, opening his eyes and the volume by a common impulse. "Imprime! ha? here is papier of Mam'selle Alide, assurement."

"Take better heed of it, then," interrupted the seaman of the shawl. "As for your Cid, to me it is a useless volume, since it teaches not the latitude of a shoal nor the shape of a coast."

"Sair, it teach de morale; de rock of de passion et les grands movements de l'ame! Oui, sair; it teach all un Monsieur wish to know. Tout le monde read him in la France, en province comme en ville. If sa Majeste le grand Louis be not so mal avise as to chasser Messieurs les Huguenots from his royaume, I shall go to Paris to hear le Cid moi-meme!"

"A good journey to you, Monsieur Cue. We may meet on the road, until which time I take my departure. The day may come when we shall converse with a rolling sea beneath us. Till then, brave cheer!"

"Adieu, Monsieur," returned Francois, bowing with a politeness that had become too familiar to be forgotten. "If we do not meet but in the sea, we shall not meet nevair. Ah, ha, ha! Monsieur le Marin n'aime pas a entendre parler de la gloire de la France! Je voudrais bien savoir lire ce f——e Shak-a-spear, pour voir combien l'immortel Corneille lui est superieur. Ma foi, oui; Monsieur Pierre Corneille est vraiment un homme illustre!"

The faithful, self-complacent, and aged valet then pursued his way toward the large oak on the bluff; for as he ceased speaking, the mariner of the gay sash had turned deeper into the woods, and left him alone. Proud of the manner in which he had met the audacity of the stranger, prouder still of the reputation of the author, whose fame had been known in France long before his own departure from Europe, and not a little consoled with the reflection that he had contributed his mite to support the honor of his distant and well-beloved country, the honest Francois pressed the volume affectionately beneath his arm, and hastened on after his mistress.

Though the position of Staten Island and the surrounding bays is so familiar to the Manhattanese, an explanation of the localities may be agreeable to readers who dwell at a distance from the scene of the tale.

It has already been said that the principal communication between the Bays of Raritan and York is called the Narrows. At the mouth of this passage the land on Staten Island rises in a high bluff, which overhangs the water, not unlike the tale-fraught cape of Misenum. From this elevated point, the eye not only commands a view of both estuaries and the city, but it looks far beyond the point of Sandy Hook into the open sea. It is here that, in our own days, ships are first noted in the offing and whence the news of the approach of his vessel is communicated to the expecting merchant by means of the telegraph. In the early part of the last century, arrivals were too rare to support such an establishment. The bluff was therefore little resorted to, except by some occasional admirer of scenery, or by those countrymen whom business, at long intervals, drew to the spot. It had been early cleared of its wood, and the oak already mentioned was the only tree standing in a space of some ten or a dozen acres.

It has been said that Alderman Van Beverout had appointed this solitary oak as the place of rendezvous with Francois. Thither then he took his way on parting from the valet, and to this spot we must now transfer the scene. A rude seat had been placed around the root of the tree, and here the whole party, with the exception of the absent domestic, were soon seated. In a minute, however, they were

joined by the exulting Francois, who immediately related the particulars of his recent interview with the stranger.

"A clear conscience, with cordial friends, and a fair balance sheet, may keep a man warm in January, even in this climate," said the Alderman, willing to turn the discourse; "but what with rebellious blacks, hot streets, and spoiling furs, it passeth mortal powers to keep cool in yonder overgrown and crowded town. Thou seest, Patroon, the spot of white on the opposite side of the bay. Breezes and fanning! that is the Lust in Rust, where cordial enters the mouth at every breath, and where a man has room to cast up the sum-total of his thoughts any hour in the twenty-four."

"We seem quite as effectually alone on this hill, with the advantage of having a city in the view," remarked Alida, with an emphasis that showed that she meant even much more than she expressed.

"We are by ourselves, niece of mine," returned the Alderman, rubbing his hands as if he secretly felicitated himself that the facts were so. "That truth cannot be denied, and good company we are, though the opinion comes from one who is not a cipher in the party. Modesty is a poor man's wealth; but as we must grow substantial in the world, Patroon, one can afford to speak truth of himself as well as of his neighbor."

"In which case, little but good will be uttered from the mouth of Alderman Van Beverout," said Ludlow, appearing so suddenly from the root of the tree as effectually to shut the mouth of the burgher. "My desire to offer the services of the ship to your party has led to this abrupt intrusion, and I hope will obtain its pardon."

"The power to forgive is a prerogative of the Governor, who represents the Queen," dryly returned the Alderman. "If her Majesty has so little employment for her cruisers, that their captains can dispose of them in behalf of old men and young maidens—why, happy is the age, and commerce should flourish."

"If the two duties are compatible, the greater the reason why a commander should felicitate himself that he may be of service to so many. You are bound to the Jersey Highlands, Mr. Van Beverout?"

"I am bound to a very comfortable and very private abode called the Lust in Rust, Captain Cornelius Van Cuyler Ludlow."

The young man bit his lips, and his healthful but brown cheek flushed a deeper red than common, though he preserved his composure.

"And I am bound to sea," he soon said. "The wind is getting fresh, and your boat, which I see this moment is standing in for the island, will find it difficult to make way against its force. The *Coquette's* anchor will be aweigh in twenty minutes, and I shall find two hours of an ebbing tide, and a topgallant breeze, but too short a time for the pleasure of entertaining such guests. I am certain that the fears of la Belle will favor my wishes, whichsoever side of the question her inclinations my happen to be."

"And they are with her uncle," quickly returned Alida. "I am so little of a sailor that prudence, if not pusillanimity, teaches me to depend on the experience of older heads."

"Older I may not pretend to be," said Ludlow, coloring; "but Mr. Van Beverout will see no pretension in believing myself as good a judge of wind and tide as even he himself can be."

"You are said to command her Majesty's sloop with skill, Captain Ludlow, and it is creditable to the colony that it has produced so good an officer; though I believe your grandfather came into the province so lately as on the restoration of King Charles the Second."

"We cannot claim descent from the United Provinces, Alderman Van Beverout, on the paternal side; but whatever may have been the political opinions of my grandfather, those of his descendant have never been questioned. Let me entreat the fair Alida to take counsel of the apprehension I am sure she feels, and to persuade her uncle that the *Coquette* is safer than his periagua."

"It is said to be easier to enter than to

quit your ship," returned the laughing Alida. "By certain symptoms that attended our passage to the island, your *Coquette*, like others, is fond of conquests. One is not safe beneath so malign an influence."

"This is a reputation given by our enemies. I had hoped for a different answer from la belle Barberie."

The close of the sentence was uttered with an emphasis that caused the blood to quicken its movements in the veins of the maiden. It was fortunate that neither of their companions was very observant, or else suspicions might have been excited that a better intelligence existed between the young sailor and the heiress than would have comported with their wishes and intentions.

"I had hoped for a different answer from la belle Barberie," repeated Ludlow, in a lower voice, but with even a still more emphatic tone than before.

There was evidently a struggle in the mind of Alida. She overcame it before her confusion could be noticed; and turning to the valet she said, with the composure and grace that became a gentlewoman:

"Rends moi le livre, Francois."

"Le voici—ah! ma chere, Mam'selle Alide, que ce Monsieur le Marin se fachait a cause de la gloire, et des beaux vers de notre illustre M. Pierre Corneille!"

"Here is an English sailor that I am sure will not deny the merit of an admired writer, even though he come of a nation that is commonly called hostile, Francois," returned his mistress, smiling. "Captain Ludlow, it is now a month since I am your debtor, by promise, for a volume of Corneille, and I here acquit myself of the obligation. When you have perused the contents of this book, with the attention they deserve, I may hope—"

"For a speedy opinion of their merits."

"I was about to say, to receive the volume again, as it is a legacy from my father," steadily joined Alida.

"Legacies and foreign tongues!" muttered the Alderman. "One is well enough; but for the other, English or Dutch are all that the wisest man need learn. I never could understand an account of profit and loss in any other tongue; and even a favorable balance never appears so great as it is, unless the account be rendered in one or the other of the national dialects. Captain Ludlow, we thank you for your politeness, but here is one of my fellows to tell us that my periagua is arrived; and, wishing you a happy and a long cruise, as we say of lives, I bid you adieu."

The young seaman returned the salutations of the party, with a better grace than his previous solicitude to persuade them to enter his ship might have given them reason to expect. He saw them descend the hill, toward the water of the outer bay, with entire composure; and it was only after they had entered a thicket which hid them from view, that he permitted his feelings to have sway.

Then, indeed, he drew the volume from his pocket, and opened its leaves with an eagerness he could no longer control. It seemed as if he expected to read more, in the pages, than the author had caused to be placed there; but when his eye caught sight of a sealed billet, the legacy of M. de Barberie fell at his feet, and the paper was torn asunder, with all the anxiety of one who expected to find in its contents a decree of life or death.

Amazement was clearly the first emotion of the young seaman. He read and re-read; struck his brow with his hand; gazed about him at the land and water; re-perused the note; examined the superscription, which was simply to "Capt. Ludlow, of her Majesty's ship *Coquette*;" smiled; muttered between his teeth; seemed vexed, yet delighted; read the note again word by word, and finally thrust it into his pocket, with the air of a man who had found reason for both regret and satisfaction in its contents.

CHAPTER VI.

"What, has this thing appeared again, to-night?"
—HAMLET.

"THE face of man is the log-book of his thoughts, and Captain Ludlow's seems

agreeable," observed a voice that came from one who was not far from the commander of the *Coquette*, while the latter was still enacting the pantomime described in the close of the preceding chapter.

"Who speaks of thoughts and log-books, or who dares to pry into my movements?" demanded the young sailor, fiercely.

"One who has trifled with the first and scribbled in the last too often not to know how to meet a squall, whether it be seen in the clouds or only on the face of man. As for looking into your movements, Captain Ludlow, I have watched too many big ships in my time to turn aside at each light cruiser that happens to cross my course. I hope, sir, you have an answer; every hail has its right to a civil reply."

Ludlow could scarce believe his senses, when, on turning to face the intruder, he saw himself confronted by the audacious eye and calm mien of the mariner who had once before, that morning, braved his resentment. Curbing his indignation, however, the young man endeavored to emulate the coolness which, notwithstanding his inferior condition, imparted to the air of the other something that was imposing, if it were not authoritative. Perhaps the singularity of the adventure aided in effecting an object that was a little difficult of attainment in one accustomed to receive so much habitual deference from most of those who made the sea their home. Swallowing his resentment, the young commander answered:

"He that knows how to face his enemies with spirit may be accounted sufficiently bold: but he who braves the anger of his friends is foolhardy."

"And he who does neither is wiser than both," rejoined the hero of the sash. "Captain Ludlow, we meet on equal terms, at present, and the parley may be managed with some freedom."

"Equality is a word that ill applies to men of stations so different."

"Of our stations and duties it is not necessary to speak. I hope that, when the proper time shall come, both may be found ready to be at the first, and equal to discharge the last. But Captain Ludlow, backed by the broadside of the *Coquette* and the cross-fire of his marines, is not Captain Ludlow alone on a sea-bluff, with a crutch no longer than his arm and a stout heart. As the first, he is like a spar supported by backstays and forestays, braces and standing-rigging; while as the latter, he is the stick which keeps his head aloft by the soundness and quality of its timber. You have the appearance of one who can go alone, even though it blew heavier than at present, if one may judge of the force of the breeze by the manner it presses on the sails of yonder boat in the bay."

"Yonder boat begins to feel the wind, truly!" said Ludlow, suddenly losing all other interest in the appearance of the periagua which held Alida and her friends, and which, at that instant, shot out from beneath the cover of the hill into the broad opening of Raritan Bay. "What think you of the time, my friend? a man of your years should speak with knowledge of the weather."

"Women and winds are only understood when fairly in motion," returned he of the sash; "now any mortal who consulted comfort and the skies would have preferred a passage in her Majesty's ship *Coquette* to one in yonder dancing periagua; yet the fluttering silk we see in the boat tells us there is one who has thought otherwise."

"You are a man of singular intelligence," cried Ludlow, again facing the intruder; "as well as one of singular——"

"Effrontery," rejoined the other, observing that the commander hesitated. "Let the commissioned officer of the Queen speak boldly; I am no better than a topman, or at most a quartermaster."

"I wish to say nothing disagreeable, but I find your knowledge of my offer to convey the lady and her friends to the residence of Alderman Van Beverout, a little surprising."

"And I see nothing to wonder at in your offer to convey the lady anywhere, though the liberality to her friends is not an act of so clear explanation. When young men speak from the heart, their words are not uttered in whispers."

"Which would imply that you overheard our conversation. I believe it, for here is cover at hand to conceal you. It may be, sir, that you have eyes as well as ears."

"I confess to have seen your countenance changing sides, like a member of parliament turning to a new leaf in his conscience at the minister's signal, while you overhauled a bit of paper——"

"Whose contents you could not know!"

"Whose contents I took to be some private orders, given by a lady who is too much of a coquette herself to accept your offer to sail in a vessel of the same name."

"By heavens, the fellow has reason in his inexplicable impudence!" muttered Ludlow, pacing backward and forward beneath the shadow of the tree. "The language and acts of the girl are in contradiction, and I am a fool to be trifled with, like a midshipman fresh broken loose from his mother's apron-string. Harkee, Master—a—a— You've a name, I suppose, like any other straggler on the ocean."

"Yes. When the hail is loud enough to be heard, I answer to the call of Thomas Tiller."

"Well, then, Master Tiller, so clever a seaman should be glad to serve the Queen."

"Were it not for duty to another, whose claim comes first, nothing could be more agreeable than to lend a lady in distress a helping hand."

"And who is he, who may prefer a claim to your services in competition with the Majesty of these realms?" demanded Ludlow, with a little of the pretension that, when speaking of its privileges, is apt to distinguish the manner of one who has been accustomed to regard royalty with reverence.

"Myself. When our affairs call us the same way, no one can be readier than I to keep her Majesty's company; but——"

"This is presuming too far, on the trifling of a moment," interrupted Ludlow; "you know, sirrah, that I have the right to command your services, without entering into a parley for them; and which, notwithstanding your gay appearance, may, after all, be little worth the trouble."

"There is no need to push matters to extremity between us, Captain Ludlow," resumed the stranger, who had appeared to muse for a moment. "If I have baffled your pursuit once to-day, it was perhaps to make my merit in entering the ship freely less undeniable. We are here alone, and your honor will account it no boasting, if I say that a man well-limbed and active, who stands six feet between plank and carline, is not likely to be led against his will, like a yawl towing at the stern of a four-and-forty. I am a seaman, sir; and though the ocean is my home, I never venture on it without sufficient footing. Look abroad from this hill, and say whether there is any craft in view, except the crusier of the Queen, which would be likely to suit the taste of a mariner of the long voyage."

"By which you would have me understand you are here in quest of service?"

"Nothing less; and though the opinion of a foremast Jack may be of little value, you will not be displeased to hear that I might look farther without finding a prettier sea-boat, or a swifter, than the one which sails under your own orders. A seaman of your station, Captain Ludlow, is not now to learn that a man speaks differently, while his name is his own, and after he has given it away to the crown, and therefore I hope my present freedom will not be very long remembered."

"I have met men of your humor, before, my friend, and I have not now to learn, that a thorough man-of-war's man is as impudent on shore as he is obedient afloat. Is that a sail, in the offing, or is it the wing of a sea-fowl, glittering in the sun?"

"It may be either," observed the audacious mariner, turning his eyes leisurely toward the open ocean, "for we have a wide lookout from this windy bluff. Here are gulls sporting above the waves, that turn their feathers toward the light."

"Look more seaward. That spot of shining white should be the canvas of some craft, hovering in the offing!"

"Nothing more probable, in so light a

breeze. Your coasters are in and out, like water-rats on a wharf, at any hour of the twenty-four — and yet to me it seems the comb of a breaking sea."

"'Tis snow-white duck; such as your swift rover wears on his loftier spars!"

"A duck that is flown," returned the stranger dryly, "for it is no longer to be seen. These flyaways, Captain Ludlow, give us seamen many sleepless nights and idle chases. I was once running down the coast of Italy, between the Island of Corsica and the main, when one of these delusions beset the crew, in a manner that hath taught me to put little faith in eyes, unless backed by a clear horizon and a cool head."

"I'll hear the circumstance," said Ludlow, withdrawing his gaze from the distant ocean, like one who was satisfied his senses had been deceived. "What of this marvel of the Italian seas?"

"A marvel truly, as your honor will confess, when I read you the affair, much in the words I had it logged, for the knowledge of all concerned. It was the last hour of the second dog-watch on Easter Sunday, with the wind here at southeast-easterly. A light air filled the upper canvas, and just gave us command of the ship. The mountains of Corsica with Monte Christo and Elba, had all been sunk some hours, and we were on the yards, keeping a lookout for a land-fall on the Roman coast. A low, thick bank of drifting fog lay along the sea, inshore of us, which all believed to be the sweat of the land, and thought no more of; though none wished to enter it, for that is a coast where foul airs rise, and through which the gulls and land-birds refuse to fly. Well, here we lay, the mainsail in the brails, the topsails beating the mastheads, like a maiden fanning herself when she sees her lover, and nothing full but the upper duck, with the sun fairly below the water in the western board. I was then young and quick of eye, as of foot, and therefore among the first to see the sight!"

"Which was——" said Ludlow, interested, in spite of his assumed air of indifference.

"Why, here just above the bank of foul air, that ever rests on that coast, there was seen an object, that looked like ribs of bright light, as if a thousand stars had quitted their usual berths in the heaven, to warn us off the land by a supernatural beacon. The sight was in itself altogether out of nature and surprising. As the night thickened, it grew brighter and more glowing, as if 'twere meant in earnest to warn us from the coast. But when the word was passed to send the glasses aloft, there was seen a glittering cross on high, and far above the spars on which earthly ships carry their private signals."

"This was indeed extraordinary! and what did you, to come at the character of the heavenly symbol?"

"We wore off shore, and left it a clear berth for bolder mariners. Glad enough was I to see, with the morning sun, the snowy hills of Corsica again!"

"And the appearance of that object was never explained?"

"Nor ever will be. I have since spoken with the mariners of that sea concerning the sight, but never found any who could pretend to have seen it. There was indeed one bold enough to say there is a church, far inland, of height and magnitude sufficient to be seen some leagues at sea, and that, favored by our position and the mists that hung above the low grounds, we had seen its upper works, looming above the fogs, and lighted for some brilliant ceremony; but we were all too old in seaman's experience to credit so wild a tale. I know not but a church may loom, as well as a hill or a ship; but he who pretends to say that the hands of man can thus pile stones among the clouds, should be certain of believers, ere he pushes the tale too far."

"Your narrative is extraordinary, and the marvel should have been looked into closer. It may truly have been a church, for there stands an edifice at Rome which towers to treble the height of a cruiser's masts."

"Having rarely troubled churches, I know not why a church should trouble me," said the mariner of the sash, while

he turned his back on the ocean, as if indisposed to regard the waste of water longer. "It is now twelve years since that sight was seen, and though a seaman of many voyages, my eyes have not looked upon the Roman coast from that hour to this. Will your honor lead the way from the bluff, as becomes your rank?"

"Your tale of the burning cross and looming church, Master Tiller, had almost caused me to forget to watch the movements of yon periagua," returned Ludlow, who still continued to face the bay. "That obstinate old Dutchman—I say, sir, that Mr. Alderman Van Beverout has greater confidence in this description of craft than I feel myself. I like not the looks of yonder cloud, which is rising from out the mouth of Raritan, and here, seaward, we have a gloomy horizon. By Heaven! there is a sail flying in the offing, or my eye hath lost its use and judgment."

"Your Honor sees the wing of the sporting gull again; it has been nigh to deceive my sight, which would be to cheat the lookout of a man that has the advantage of some ten or fifteen years' more practice in marine appearances. I remember once, when beating among the islands of the China seas, with the trades here at southeast——"

"Enough of your marvels, friend; the church is as much as I can swallow in one morning. It may have been a gull; for I confess the object small; yet it had the steadiness and size of a distant sail. There is some reason to expect one on our coast, for whom a bright and seaman's watch must be had."

"This may then leave me a choice of ships," rejoined Tiller. "I thank your honor for having spoken, before I had given myself away to the Queen; who is a lady that is much more apt to receive gifts of this nature than to return them."

"If your respect aboard shall bear any proportion to your hardihood on shore, you may be accounted a model of civility! But a mariner of your pretension should have some regard to the character of the vessel in which he takes service."

"That of which your honor spoke is then a buccaneer?"

"If not a buccaneer, one but little better; a lawless trader, under the most favorable view, and there are those who think that he, who has gone so far, has not stopped short of the end. But the reputation of the Skimmer of the Seas must be known to one who has navigated the ocean as long as you."

"You will overlook the curiosity of a seafaring man in a matter of his profession," returned the mariner of the sash, with strong and evident interest in his manner. "I am lately from a distant ocean, and though many tales of the buccaneers of the islands have been narrated, I do not remember to have heard of that rover, before his name came into the discourse between me and the skipper of the boat that plies between this landing and the city. I am not altogether what I seem, Captain Ludlow; and when farther acquaintance and hard service shall have brought me more before the eyes of my commander, he may not repent having induced a thorough seaman to enter his ship by a little condescension and good nature shown while the man was still his own master. Your honor will take no offense at my boldness, when I tell you I should be glad to know more of this unlawful trader."

Ludlow riveted his eyes on the unmoved and manly countenance of his companion. There was a vague and undefined suspicion in that look; but it vanished, as the practiced organs drank in the assurance, which so much physical promise afforded, of the aid of a bold and active mariner. Rather amused than offended by the freedom of the request, he turned upon his heel, and as they descended the bluff on their way toward the place of landing, he continued the dialogue.

"You are truly from a distant ocean," said the young captain of the *Coquette*, smiling like a man who apologizes to himself for an act of what he thought undue condescension, "if the exploits of a brigantine known by the name of the *Water-Witch*, and of him who commands her, under the fit appellation of the Skimmer

of the Seas, have not yet reached your ears. It is now five summers since orders have been in the colonies for the cruisers to be on the alert to hunt the picaroon; and it is even said, the daring smuggler has often braved the pennants of the narrow seas. 'Twould be a bigger ship, if not knighthood, to the lucky officer who should catch the knave!"

"He must drive a money-gaining trade to run these risks; and to brave the efforts of so many skillful gentlemen! May I add to a presumption that your honor already finds too bold, if one may judge by a displeased eye, by asking if report speaks to the face and other particulars of the person of this—freetrader, one must call him, though freebooter should be a better word."

"What matters the personal condition of a rogue?" said Captain Ludlow, who perhaps remembered that the freedom of their intercourse had been carried as far as comported with prudence.

"What matter, truly! I asked because the description answers a little to that of a man I once knew in the seas of farther India, and who has long since disappeared, though no one can say whither he has gone. But this Skimmer of the Seas is some Spaniard of the Main, or perhaps a Dutchman come from the country that is awash, in order to taste of *terra firma*."

"Spaniard of the southern coast never carried so bold a sail in these seas, nor was there ever known a Dutchman with so light a heel. The fellow is said to laugh at the swiftest cruiser out of England! As to his figure, I have heard little good of it. 'Tis said, he is some soured officer of better days, who has quitted the intercourse of honest men, because roguery is so plainly written on his face, that he vainly tries to hide it."

"Mine was a proper man, and one that need not have been ashamed to show his countenance among his fellows," said he of the sash. "This cannot be the same, if indeed there be any on the coast. Is't known, your honor, that the man is truly here?"

"So goes a rumor; though so many idle tales have led me before to seek the smuggler where he is not, that I give but little faith to the report. The periagua has the wind more at west, and the cloud in the mouth of the Raritan is breaking into scud. The Alderman will have a lucky run of it."

"And the gulls have gone more seaward—a certain sign of pleasant weather," returned the other, glancing a quick but keen look over the horizon, in the offing. "I believe our rover, with his light duck, has taken flight among them!"

"We will then go in pursuit. My ship is bound to sea; and it is time, Master Tiller, that I know in what berth you are willing to serve the Queen."

"God bless her Majesty! Anne is a royal lady, and she had a lord high admiral for her husband. As for a berth, sir, one always wishes to be captain, even though he may be compelled to eat his rations in the lee-scuppers. I suppose the first lieutenancy is filled to your honor's liking?"

"Sirrah, this is trifling; one of your years and experience need not be told that commissions are obtained by service."

"Under favor; I confess the error. Captain Ludlow, you are a man of honor, and will not deceive a sailor who puts trust in your word?"

"Sailor or landsman, he is safe who has the gage."

"Then, sir, I ask it. Suffer me to enter your ship; to look into my future messmates, and to judge of their characters; to see if the vessel suits my humor; and then to quit it, if I find it convenient."

"Fellow," said Ludlow, "this impudence almost surpasseth patience!"

"The request is reasonable, as can be shown," gravely returned the unknown mariner. "Now Captain Ludlow of the *Coquette* would gladly tie himself, for better or worse, to a fair lady who has lately gone on the water, and yet there are thousands who might be had with less difficulty."

"Still deeper and deeper in thy effrontery! And what if this be true?"

"Sir, a ship is a seaman's mistress—nay, when fairly under a pennant, with a war declared, he may be said to be wed-

ded to her, lawfully or not. He becomes 'bone of her bone, and flesh of her flesh, until death doth them part.' To such a long compact there should be liberty of choice. Has not your mariner a taste as well as your lover? The harpings and counter of his ship are the waist and shoulders; the rigging, the ringlets; the cut and fit of the sails, the fashion of the millinery; the guns are always called the teeth, and her paint is the blush and bloom! Here is matter of choice, sir; and, without leave to make it, I must wish your honor a happy cruise, and the Queen a better servitor."

"Why, Master Tiller," cried Ludlow, laughing, "you trust too much to these stunted oaks, if you believe it exceeds my power to hunt you out of their cover at pleasure. But I take you at your word. The *Coquette* shall receive you on these conditions, and with the confidence that a first-rate city belle would enter a country ball-room."

"I follow in your honor's wake without more words," returned he of the sash, for the first time respectfully raising his canvas cap to the young commander. "Though not actually married, consider me a man betrothed."

It is not necessary to pursue the discourse between the two seamen any further. It was maintained, and with sufficient freedom on the part of the inferior, until they reached the shore, and came in full view of the pennant of the Queen, when with the tact of an old man-of-war's man, he threw into his manner all the respect that was usually required by the difference of rank.

Half an hour later, the *Coquette* was rolling at a single anchor, as the puffs of wind came off the hills on her three topsails; and shortly after she was seen standing through the Narrows, with a fresh southwesterly breeze. In all these movements there was nothing to attract attention. Notwithstanding the sarcastic allusions of Alderman Van Beverout, the cruiser was far from being idle; and her passage outward was a circumstance of so common occurrence that it excited no comment among the boatmen of the bay and the coasters, who alone witnessed her departure.

CHAPTER VII.

"I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise."
—ROMEO AND JULIET.

A HAPPY mixture of land and water, seen by a bright moon, and beneath the sky of the fortieth degree of latitude, cannot fail to make a pleasing picture. Such was the landscape which the reader must now endeavor to present to his mind.

The wide estuary of Raritan is shut in from the winds and billows of the open sea by a long, low, and narrow cape, or point, which, by a medley of the Dutch and English languages, that is by no means rare in the names of places that lie within the former territories of the United Provinces of Holland, is known by the name of Sandy Hook. This tongue of land appears to have been made by the unremitting and opposing actions of the waves on one side, and of the currents of the different rivers that empty their waters into the bay, on the other. It is commonly connected with the low coast of New Jersey, to the south; but there are periods of many years in succession, during which there exists an inlet from the sea, between what may be termed the inner end of the cape and the mainland. During these periods, Sandy Hook, of course, becomes an island. Such was the fact at the time of which it is our business to write.

The outer or ocean side of this low and narrow bank of sand is a smooth and regular beach, like that seen on most of the Jersey coast, while the inner is intended in a manner to form several convenient anchoring-grounds for ships that seek a shelter from easterly gales. One of the latter is a circular and pretty cove, in which vessels of a light draught are completely embayed, and where they may in safety ride secure from any winds that blow. The harbor—or, as it is always called, the Cove—lies at the point where

the cape joins the main, and the inlet just named communicates directly with its waters whenever the passage is open. The Shrewsbury, a river of the fourth or fifth class, or, in other words, a stream of a few hundred feet in width, and of no great length, comes from the south running nearly parallel with the coast, and becomes a tributary of the bay, also, at a point near the Cove. Between the Shrewsbury and the sea, the land resembles that on the cape, being low and sandy, though not entirely without fertility. It is covered with a modest growth of pines and oaks, where it is not either subject to the labors of the husbandman, or in natural meadow. But the western bank of the river is an abrupt and high acclivity, which rises to the elevation of a mountain. It was near the base of the latter that Alderman Van Beverout, for reasons that may be more fully developed as we proceed in our tale, had seen fit to erect his villa, which, agreeably to a usage of Holland, he had called the Lust in Rust; an appellation that the merchant, who had read a few of the classics in his boyhood, was wont to say meant nothing more nor less than "otium cum dignitate."

If a love of retirement and a pure air had its influence in determining the selection of the burgher of Manhattan, he could not have made a better choice. The adjoining lands had been occupied, early in the previous century, by a respectable family of the name of Hartshorne, which continues seated at the place to the present hour. The extent of their possessions served, at that day, to keep others at a distance. If to this fact be added the formation and quality of the ground, which was, at so early a period, of trifling value for agricultural purposes, it will be seen there was as little motive as there was opportunity for strangers to intrude. As to the air, it was refreshed by the breezes of the ocean, which was scarcely a mile distant; while it had nothing to render it unhealthy or impure. With this sketch of the general features of the scene where so many of our incidents occurred, we shall proceed to describe the habitation of the Alderman a little more in detail.

The villa of the Lust in Rust was a low irregular edifice, in bricks, whitewashed to the color of the driven snow, and in a taste that was altogether Dutch. There were many gables and weathercocks, a dozen small and twisted chimneys, with numberless facilities that were intended for the nests of the storks. These airy sites were, however, untenanted, to the great admiration of the honest architect, who, like many others that bring into this hemisphere habits and opinions that are better suited to the other, never ceased expressing his surprise on the subject, though all the negroes of the neighborhood united in affirming there was no such bird in America. In front of the house there was a narrow, but an exceedingly neat lawn, encircled by shrubbery; while two old elms, that seemed coeval with the mountain, grew in the rich soil of which the base of the latter was composed. Nor was there a want of shade on any part of the natural terrace that was occupied by the buildings. It was thickly sprinkled with fruit trees, and here and there was a pine or an oak of native growth. A declivity that was rather rapid fell away in front to the level of the mouth of the river. In short, it was an ample but an unpretending country-house, in which no domestic convenience had been forgotten; while it had little to boast of in the way of architecture, except its rusty vanes and twisted chimneys. A few out-houses for the accommodation of the negroes were nigh and nearer to the river; there were barns and stables of dimensions and materials altogether superior to those that the appearance of arable land, or the condition of the small farm would seem to render necessary. The periagua in which the proprietor had made his passage across the outer bay lay at a small wooden wharf immediately below.

For the earlier hours of evening, the flashing of candles, and a general and noisy movement among the blacks, had denoted the presence of the master of the villa. But the activity had gradually subsided; and before the clock struck

nine, the manner in which the lights were distributed, and the general silence, showed that the party, most probably fatigued with their journey, had already separated for the night. The clamor of the negroes had ceased, and the quiet of deep sleep was already prevailing among their humble dwellings.

At the northern extremity of the villa which, it will be remembered, leaned against the mountain, and facing the east, or fronting the river and the sea, there stood a little wing, even more deeply embowered in shrubbery and low trees than the other parts of the edifice, and which was constructed altogether in a different style. This was a pavilion erected for the particular accommodation and at the cost of la belle Barberie. Here the heiress of the two fortunes was accustomed to keep her own little menage during the weeks passed in the country; and here she amused herself in those pretty and feminine employments that suited her years and tastes. In compliment to the beauty and origin of its inhabitant, the gallant Francois had christened this particular portion of the villa la Cour des Fees, a name that had got into general use, though somewhat corrupted in sound.

On the present occasion the blinds of the principal apartment of the pavilion were open, and its mistress was still to be seen at one of the windows. Alida was at an age when the sex is most sensible of lively impressions, and she looked abroad on the loveliness of the landscape, and on the soft stillness of the night, with the pleasure that such a mind is wont to receive from objects of natural beauty.

There was a young moon, and a firmament glowing with a myriad of stars. The light was shed softly on the water, though here and there the ocean glittered with its rays. A nearly imperceptible, but what seamen call a heavy air, came off the sea, bringing with it the refreshing coolness of the hour. The surface of the immense waste was perfectly unruffled, both within and without the barrier of sand that forms the cape; but the body of the element was heaving and setting heavily, in a manner to resemble the sleeping respiration of some being of huge physical frame. The roar of the surf, which rolled up in long and white curls upon the sands, was the only audible sound; but that was heavy and incessant, sometimes swelling on the air hollow and threatening, and at others dying in dull and distant murmurs on the ear.

There was a charm in these varieties of sound, and in the solemn stillness of such a night, that drew Alida into her little balcony; and she leaned forward beyond its shadow of sweet-brier, to gaze at a part of the bay that was not visible in the front view, from her windows.

La belle Barberie smiled when she saw the dim masts and dark hull of a ship which was anchored near the end of the cape, and within its protection. There was a look of womanly pride in her dark eye, and haply some consciousness of womanly power in the swell of her rich lip, while a taper finger beat the bar of the balcony rapidly, and withont consciousness of its employment.

"The loyal Captain Ludlow has quickly ended his cruise!" said the maiden aloud, for she spoke under the influence of a triumph that was too natural to be suppressed. "I shall become a convert to my uncle's opinions, and think the Queen badly served."

"He who serves one mistress faithfully has no light task," returned a voice from among the shrubbery that grew beneath, and nearly veiled the window; "but he who is devoted to two, may well despair of success with both!"

Alida recoiled, and at the next instant she saw her place occupied by the commander of the *Coquelte*. Before venturing to cross the low barrier that still separated him from the little parlor, the young man endeavored to read the eye of its occupant; and then, either mistaking its expression, or bold in his years or hopes, he entered the room.

Though certainly unused to have her apartment scaled with so little ceremony, there was neither apprehension nor wonderment in the countenance of the fair descendant of the Huguenot. The blood mantled more richly on her cheek, and

the brightness of an eye that was never dull, increased, while her fine form became firm and commanding.

"I have heard that Captain Ludlow gained much of his renown by gallantry in boarding," she said in a voice whose meaning admitted of no misconception; "but I had hoped his ambition was satisfied with laurels so fairly won from the enemies of his country!"

"A thousand pardons, fairest Alida," interrupted the youth; "you know the obstacles that the jealous watchfulness of your uncle opposes to my desire to speak with you."

"They are then opposed in vain, for Alderman Van Beverout has weakly believed the sex and condition of his ward would protect her from these coups-de-main."

"Nay, Alida; this is being more capricious than the wind! You know too well how far my suit is unpleasant to your guardian to torture a slight departure from cold observances into cause of serious complaint. I had hoped—perhaps, I should say, I had presumed on the contents of your letter, for which I return a thousand thanks; but do not thus cruelly destroy expectations that have so lately been raised beyond the point, perhaps, which reason may justify."

The glow which had begun to subside on the face of la belle Barberie again deepened, and for a moment it appeared as if her high self-dependence was a little weakened. After an instant of reflection, however, she answered steadily, though not entirely without emotion.

"Reason, Captain Ludlow, has limited female propriety within narrow limits," she said. "In answering your letter, I have consulted good nature more than prudence; and I find that you are not slow in causing me to repent the error."

"If I ever cause you to repent confidence in me, sweet Alida, may disgrace in my profession, and the distrust of the whole sex, be my punishment! But, have I not reason to complain of this inconsistency on your part? Ought I to expect so severe a reprimand—severe, because cold and ironical—for an offense, venial as the wish to proclaim my gratitude?"

"Gratitude!" repeated Alida, and this time her wonder was not feigned. "The word is strong, sir; and it expresses more than an act of courtesy, so simple as that which may attend the lending a volume of popular poetry can have any right to claim."

"I have strangely misconceived the meaning of the letter, or this has been a day of folly!" said Ludlow, endeavoring to swallow his discontent. "But, no; I have your own words to refute that averted eye and cold look; and, by the faith of a sailor, Alida, I will believe your deliberate and well-reflected thoughts before these capricious fancies, which are unworthy of your nature. Here are the very words; I shall not easily part with the flattering hopes they convey!"

La belle Barberie now regarded the young man in open amazement. Her color changed; for of the indiscretion of writing she knew she was not guiltless—but of having written in terms to justify the confidence of the other, she felt no consciousness. The customs of the age, the profession of her suitor, and the hour, induced her to look steadily into his face, to see whether the man stood before her in all the decency of his reason. But Ludlow had the reputation of being exempt from a vice that was then but too common among seamen, and there was nothing in his ingenuous and really handsome features to cause her to distrust his present discretion. She touched a bell, and signed to her companion to be seated.

"Francois," said the mistress, when the old valet, but half awake, entered the apartment, "fais moi le plaisir de m'apporter de cette eau de la fontaine du bosquet, et du vin—le Capitaine Ludlow a soif; et rappelle-toi, bon Francois, il ne faut pas deranger mon oncle a cette heure; il doit etre bien fatigue de son voyage."

When her respectful and respectable servitor had recteved his commission and departed, Alida took a seat herself, in the confidence of having deprived the visit of Ludlow of its clandestine character, and at the same time having employed the

valet on an errand that would leave her sufficient leisure to investigate the inexplicable meaning of her companion.

"You have my word, Captain Ludlow, that this unseasonable appearance in the pavilion is indiscreet, not to call it cruel," she said, so soon as they were again alone; "but that you have it, in any manner, to justify your imprudence, I must continue to doubt until confronted by proof."

"I had thought to have made a very different use of this," returned Ludlow, drawing a letter—we admit it with some reluctance in one so simple and so manly—from his bosom; "and even now, I take shame in producing it, though at your own orders."

"Some magic has wrought a marvel, or the scrawl has no such importance," observed Alida, taking a billet that she now began to repent having ever written. "The langnage of politeness and female reserve must admit of strange perversions, or all who read are not the best interpreters."

La belle Barberie ceased speaking, for the instant her eye fell on the paper an absorbing and intense curiosity got the better of her resentment. We shall give the contents of the letter, precisely in the words which caused so much amazement, and possibly some little uneasiness, to the fair creature who was perusing it.

"The life of a seaman," said the paper, in a delicate and beautiful female hand, "is one of danger and exposure. It inspires confidence in woman by the frankness to which it gives birth, and it merits indulgence by its privations. She who writes this is not insensible to the merit of men of this bold calling. Admiration for the sea, and for those who live on it, has been her weakness through life; and her visions of the future, like her recollections of the past, are not entirely exempt from a contemplation of its pleasures. The usages of different nations—glory in arms—change of scene—with constancy in the affections, all sweetened by affluence, are temptations too strong for a female imagination, and they should not be without their influence on the judgment of man. Adieu."

This note was read, re-perused and, for the third time conned, ere Alida ventured to raise her eyes to the face of the expectant young man.

"And this indelicate and unfeminine rhapsody, Captain Ludlow has seen proper to ascribe to me!" she said, while her voice trembled between pride and mortification.

"To whom else can I impute it? No other, lovely Alida, could utter language so charming, in words so properly chosen."

The long lashes of the maiden played quickly about their dark organs; then, conquering feelings that were strangely in contradiction to each other, she said with dignity, turning to a little escritoire which lay beside her dressing-box—

"My correspondence is neither very important nor very extensive; but such as it is, happily for the reputation of the writer's taste, if not for her sanity, I believe it is in my power to show the trifle I thought it decorous to write, in reply to your own letter. Here is a copy," she added, opening what in fact was a draught, and reading aloud.

"I thank Captain Ludlow for his attention in affording me an opportunity of reading a narrative of the cruel deeds of the buccaneers. In addition to the ordinary feelings of humanity, one cannot but regret that men so heartless are to be found in a profession that is commonly thought to be generous and tender of the weak. We will hope, however, that the very wicked and cowardly among seamen exist only as foils to render the qualities of the very bold and manly more conspicuous. No one can be more sensible of this truth than the friends of Captain Ludlow," the voice of Alida fell a little as she came to this sentence, "who has not now to earn a reputation for mercy. In return, I send the copy of the 'Cid,' which honest Francois affirms to be superior to all other poems, not even excepting Homer—a book of which I believe he is innocent of calumniating, from ignorance of its contents. Again thanking Captain Ludlow for this instance of his repeated attentions, I beg he will keep the volume

until he shall return from his intended cruise."

"This note is but a copy of the one you have, or ought to have," said the niece of the Alderman, as she raised her glowing face from leaning over the paper, "though it is not signed, like that, with the name of Alida de Barberie."

When this explanation was over, both parties sat looking at each other in silent amazement. Still Alida saw, or thought she saw, that notwithstanding the previous professions of her admirer, the young man rejoiced he had been deceived. Respect for delicacy and reserve in the other sex is so general and natural among men, that they who succeed the most in destroying its barriers rarely fail to regret their triumph; and he who truly loves can never long exult in any violation of propriety in the object of his affections, even though the concession be made in his own favor. Under the influence of this commendable and healthful feeling, Ludlow, while he was in some respects mortified at the turn affairs had taken, felt sensibly relieved from a load of doubt to which the extraordinary language of the letter he believed his mistress to have written had given birth. His companion read the state of his mind in a countenance as frank as the face of sailor could be; and though secretly pleased to gain her former place in his respect, she was also vexed and wounded that he had ever presumed to distrust her reserve. She still held the inexplicable billet, and her eyes naturally sought the lines. A sudden thought seemed to strike her mind, and returning the paper, she said, coldly—

"Captain Ludlow should know his correspondent better; I much mistake if this be the first of her communications."

The young man colored to the temples and hid his face for a moment in the hollow of his hand.

"You admit the truth of my suspicions," continued la belle Barberie, "and cannot be insensible of my justice when I add that henceforth——"

"Listen to me, Alida," cried the youth, half breathless in his haste to interrupt a decision that he dreaded; "hear me, and, as Heaven is my judge, you shall hear only truth. I confess this is not the first of the letters, written in the same hand—perhaps I should say in the same spirit—but, on the honor of a loyal officer, I affirm that until circumstances lead me to think myself so happy — so very happy——"

"I understand you, sir; the work was anonymous, until you saw fit to inscribe my name as its author. Ludlow! Ludlow! how meanly have you thought of the woman you profess to love!"

"That were impossible! I mingle little with those who study the finesse of life; and loving, as I do, my noble profession, Alida, was it so unnatural to believe that another might view it with the same eyes? But since you disavow the letter—nay, your disapproval is unnecessary; I see my vanity has even deceived me in the writing—but since the delusion is over, I confess that I rejoice it is not so."

La belle Barberie smiled, and her countenance grew brighter. She enjoyed the triumph of knowing that she merited the respect of her suitor, and it was a triumph heightened by recent mortification. Then succeeded a pause of more than a minute. The embarrassment of the silence was happily interrupted by the return of Francois.

"Mam'selle Alide, voici de l'eau de la fontaine," said the valet; "mais Monsieur votre oncle s'est couche, et il a mis la clef de la cave au vin dessous son oreiller. Ma foi, ce n'est pas facile d'avoir du bon vin du tout, en Amerique, mais apres que Monsieur le Maire s'est couche, c'est toujours impossible; voila!"

"N'importe, mon cher; le Capitaine va partir, etil n'a plus soif."

"Dere is assez de jin," continued the valet, who felt for the Captain's disappointment, "mais Monsieur Loodle have du gout, an' he n'aime pas so strong liqueur."

"He has swallowed already more than was necessary for one occasion," said Alida, smiling on her admirer in a manner that left him doubtful whether he ought most to repine or to rejoice. "Thank you, Francois; your duty for

the night shall end with lighting the Captain to the door."

Then saluting the young commander in a manner that would not admit of denial, la belle Barberie dismissed her lover and the valet together.

"You have a pleasant office, Monsieur Francois," said the former, as he was lighted to the outer door of the pavilion; "it is one that many a gallant gentleman would envy."

"Oui, sair; it be grand plaisir to serve Mam'selle Alide. Je porte de fan, de book, mais quant au vin, Monsieur le Capitaine, parole d'honneur, c'est toujours impossible apres que l'aldermain s'est couche."

"Aye—the book—I think you had the agreeable duty, to-day, of carrying the book of la Belle?"

"Vraiment, oui! 'Twas ouvrage de Monsieur Pierre Corneille. On pretend, que Monsieur Shak-a-spear en a emprunte d'assez beaux sentiments!"

"And the paper between the leaves?—you were charged also with that note, good Francois?"

The valet paused, shrugged his shoulders, and laid one of his long yellow fingers on the plane of an enormous aquiline nose, while he seemed to muse. Then shaking his head perpendicularly, he preceded the Captain as before, muttering as usual, half in French and half in English—

"For le papier, I know rein du tout; c'est bien possible, parceque, voyez vous, Monsieur le Capitaine, Mam'selle Alide did say, Prenz-y garde; but I no see him, depuis. Je suppose 'twas beaux compliments ecrits on de vers of M. Pierre Corneille. Quel genie que celui de cet homme la!—n'est ce pas, Monsieur?"

"It is of no consequence, good Francois," said Ludlow, slipping a guinea into the hands of the valet. "If you should ever discover what became of that paper, however, you will oblige me by letting me know. Good-night; mes devoirs a la Belle!"

"Bon soir, Monsieur le Capitaine; c'est un brave Monsieur que celui-la, et de tres bonne famille! Il n'a pas de si grandes terres, que Monsieur le Patteroon, pourtant, on dit, qu'il doit avoir de jolies maisons et assez de rentes publiques! J'aime a servir un si genereux et loyal maitre, mais, malheureusement, il est marin! M. de Barberie n'avait pas trop d'amitie pour les gens de cette profession la."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Well, Jessica, go in;
Perhaps, I will return immediately;
Do as I bid you,
Shut doors after you; Fast bind, fast find;
A proverb never stale, in thrifty mind."
—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE decision with which la demoiselle Barberie had dismissed her suitor, was owing to some consciousness that she had need of opportunity to reflect on the singular nature of the events which had just happened, no less than to a sense of the impropriety of his visiting her at that hour and in a manner so equivocal. But, like others who act from feverish impulses, when alone the maiden repented of her precipitation; and she remembered fifty questions which might aid in clearing the affair of its mystery, that she would now gladly put. It was too late, however, for she had heard Ludlow take his leave, and had listened in breathless silence to his footstep, as he passed the shrubbery of her little lawn. Francois reappeared at the door, to repeat his wishes for her rest and happiness, and then she believed she was finally alone for the night, since the ladies of that age and country were little apt to require the assistance of their attendants, in assuming or in divesting themselves of their ordinary attire.

It was still early, and the recent interview had deprived Alida of all inclination for sleep. She placed the light in a distant corner of the apartment, and approached a window. The moon had so far changed its position as to cast a different light upon the water. The hollow washing of the surf, the dull but heavy breathing of the air from the sea, and the soft shadows of the trees and mountain, were much the same. The *Coquette* lay, as before, at her anchor near the cape, and the Shrewsbury glittered toward the

south, until its surface was concealed by the projection of a high and nearly perpendicular bluff.

The stillness was profound, for, with the exception of the dwelling of the family who occupied the estate nearest the villa, there was no other habitation within some miles of the place. Still the solitude of the situation was undisturbed by any apprehension of danger, or any tradition of violence from rude and lawless men. The peaceable character of the colonists who dwelt in the interior country was proverbial, and their habits simple; while the ocean was never entered by those barbarians who then rendered some of the seas of the other hemisphere as fearful as they were pleasant.

Notwithstanding this known and customary character of tranquillity, and the lateness of the hour, Alida had not been many moments in her balcony before she heard the sound of oars. The stroke was measured, and the noise low and distant, but it was too familiar to be mistaken. She wondered at the expedition of Ludlow, who was not accustomed to show such haste in quitting her presence, and leaned over the railing to catch a glimpse of his departing boat. Each moment she expected to see the little bark issue from out of the shadows of the land, into the sheet of brightness which stretched nearly to the cruiser. She gazed long and in vain, for no barge appeared, yet the sound had become inaudible. A light still hung at the peak of the *Coquette*, a sign that the commander was out of his vessel.

The view of a fine ship, seen by the aid of the moon, with its symmetry of spars, and its delicate tracery of cordage, and the heavy and grand movements of the hull as it rolls on the sluggish billows of a calm sea, is ever a pleasing and indeed an imposing spectacle. Alida knew that more than a hundred human beings slept within the black and silent mass, and her thoughts insensibly wandered to the business of their daring lives, their limited abode, and yet wandering existence, their frank and manly qualities, their devotion to the cause of those who occupied the land, their broken and interrupted connection with the rest of the human family, and finally to those weakened domestic ties, and to that reputation for inconstancy, which are apparently a natural consequence to all.

She sighed, and her eye wandered from the ship to that ocean on which it was constructed to dwell. From the distant, low, and nearly imperceptible shore of the island of Nassau, to the coast of New Jersey, there was one broad and untenanted waste. Even the sea-fowl rested his tired wing, and slept tranquilly on the water. The broad space appeared like some great and unfrequented desert, or rather like a denser and more material copy of the firmament by which it was canopied.

It has been mentioned that a stunted growth of oaks and pines covered much of the sandy ridge that formed the cape. The same covering furnished a dark setting to the waters of the cove. Above this outline of wood, which fringed the margin of the sea, Alida now fancied she saw an object in motion. At first, she believed some ragged and naked tree, of which the coast had many, was so placed as to deceive her vision, and had thrown its naked lines upon the background of water, in a manner to assume the shape and tracery of a light-rigged vessel. But when the dark and symmetrical spars were distinctly seen, gliding past objects that were known to be stationary, it was impossible to doubt their character. The maiden wondered, and her surprise was not unmixed with apprehension. It seemed as if the stranger, for such the vessel must needs be, was recklessly approaching a surf, that, in its most tranquil moments, was dangerous to such a fabric, and that he steered, unconscious of hazard, directly upon the land. Even the movement was mysterious and unusual. Sails there were none, and yet the light and lofty spars were soon hid behind a thicket that covered a knoll near the margin of the sea. Alida expected each moment to hear the cry of mariners in distress; then, as the minutes passed on and no such fearful sound interrupted the stillness of the night, she began to bethink her of those lawless rovers who

were known to abound among the Caribbean isles, and who were said sometimes even to enter and to refit in the smaller and more secret inlets of the American continent.

The tales, coupled with the deeds, character, and fate of the notorious Kidd, were then still recent, and although magnified and colored by vulgar exaggerations, as all such tales are known to be, enough was believed by the better instructed to make his life and death the subject of many curious and mysterious rumors. At this moment, she would have gladly recalled the young commander of the *Coquette*, to apprise him of the enemy that was nigh; then, ashamed of terrors that she was fain to hope savored more of woman's weakness than of truth, she endeavored to believe the whole some ordinary movement of a coaster, who, familiar with his situation, could not possibly be either in want of aid or an object of alarm. Just as this natural and consoling conclusion crossed her mind, she very audibly heard a step in her pavilion. It seemed near the door of the room she occupied. Breathless, more with the excitement of her imagination than with any actual fear created by this new cause of alarm, the maiden quitted the balcony, and stood motionless to listen. The door, in truth, was opened with singular caution, and, for an instant, Alida saw nothing but a confused area, in the center of which appeared the figure of a menacing and rapacious freebooter.

"Northern lights and moonshine!" growled Alderman Van Beverout, for it was no other than the uncle of the heiress, whose untimely and unexpected visit had caused her so much alarm. "This sky-watching, and turning of night into day, will be the destruction of thy beauty, niece; and we shall see how plenty Patroons are for husbands! A bright eye and a blooming cheek are thy stock in trade, girl; and she is a spendthrift of both, who is out of her bed when the clock hath struck ten."

"Your discipline would deprive many a beauty of the means of using her power," returned la demoiselle, smiling as much at the folly of her recent fears, as with affection for her reprover. "They tell me, that ten is the witching time of night, for the necromancy of the dames of Europe."

"Witch me no witches! The name reminds one of the cunning Yankees, a race that would outwit Lucifer himself, if left to set the conditions to their bargain. Here is the Patroon, wishing to let in a family of the knaves among the honest Dutchmen of his manor; and we have just settled a dispute between us, on this subject, by making the lawful trial."

"Which it may be proper to hope, dearest uncle, was not the trial by battle?"

"Peace and olive-branches, no! The Patroon of Kinderhook is the last man in the Americas that is likely to suffer by the blows of Myndert Van Beverout. I challenged the boy to hold a fine eel, that the blacks have brought out of the river to help in breaking our morning fasts, that it might be seen if he were fit to deal with the slippery rogues. By the merit of the peaceable St. Nicholas! but the son of old Hendrick Van Staats had a busy time of it! The lad gripped the fish, as the ancient tradition has it that thy uncle clenched the Holland florin, when my father put it between my fingers, within the month, in order to see if the true saving grace was likely to abide in the family for another generation. My heart misgave me for a moment; for young Oloff has the fist of a vise, and I thought the goodly names of the Harmans and Rips, Corneliuses and Dircks of the manor rent-roll were likely to be contaminated by the company of an Increase or a Peleg; but just as the Patroon thought that he had the watery viper by the throat, the fish gave an unexpected twist, and slid through his fingers by the tail. Flaws and loopholes! but that experiment has as much wisdom as wit in it!"

"And to me, it seemeth better, now that Providence has brought all the colonies under one government, that these prejudices should be forgotten. We are a people sprung from many nations, and our efforts should be to preserve the liberality

and intelligence, while we forget the weaknesses of all."

"Bravely said, for the child of a Huguenot! But I defy the man who brings prejudice to my door. I like a merry trade, and a quick calculation. Let me see the man in all New England that can tell the color of a balance-sheet quicker than one that can be named, and I'll gladly hunt up the satchel and go to school again. I love a man the better for looking to his own interests, I; and yet common honesty teaches us that there should be a convention between men, beyond which none of reputation and character ought to go."

"Which convention shall be understood by every man to be the limits of his own faculties; by which means the dull may rival the quick of thought. I fear me, uncle, there should be an eel kept on every coast to which a trader comes!"

"Prejudice and conceit, child, acting on a drowsy head; 'tis time thou seekest thy pillow, and in the morning we shall see if young Oloff of the Manor shall have better success with thy favor than with the prototype of the Jonathans. Here, put out these flaring candles, and take a modest lamp to light thee to thy bed. Glaring windows, so near midnight, give a house an extravagant name in the neighborhood."

"Our reputation for sobriety may suffer in the opinion of the eels," returned Alida, laughing, "but here are few others, I believe, to call us dissipated."

"One never knows, one never knows," muttered the Alderman, extinguishing the two large candles of his niece, and substituting his own little hand-lamp in their place. "This broad light only invites wakefulness, while the dim taper I leave is good as a sleeping draught. Kiss me, willful one, and draw thy curtains close, for the negroes will soon rise to load the periagua, that they may go up with the tide to the city. The noise of the chattering blackguards may disturb your slumbers."

"Truly, it would seem there is little here to invite such active navigation," returned Alida, saluting the cheek of her uncle, at his order. "The love of trade must be strong, when it finds the materials of commerce in a solitude similar to this."

"Thou hast divined the reason, child. Thy father, Monsieur de Barberie, had his peculiar opinions upon the subject, and doubtless he did not fail to transmit some of them to his offspring. And yet, when the Huguenot was driven from his chateau and his clayey Norman lands, the man had no distaste himself for an account current, provided the balance was in his own favor. Nations and characters! I find little difference, after all, in trade, whether it be driven with a Mohawk for his pack of furs, or with a Seigneur, who has been driven from his lands. Each strives to get the profit on his own side of the account, and the loss on that of his neighbor. So rest thee well, girl; and remember that matrimony is no more than a capital bargain, on whose success depends the sum total of a woman's comfort—and so, once more, good night."

La belle Barberie attended her uncle dutifully to the door of her pavilion, which she bolted after him; and then, finding her little apartment gloomy by the light of the small and feeble lamp he had left, she was pleased to bring its flame in contact with the wicks of the two candles he had just extinguished. Placing the three near each other on a table, the maiden again drew nigh a window. The unexpected interview with the Alderman had consumed several minutes, and she was curious to know more of the unaccountable movements of the mysterious vessel.

The same deep silence reigned about the villa, and the slumbering ocean was heaving and setting as heavily as before. Alida again looked for the boat of Ludlow; but her eye ran over the whole distance of the bright and broad streak between her and the cruiser in vain. There was the slight ripple of the water in the glittering of the moon's rays, but no speck like that the barge would make was visible. The lantern still shone at the cruiser's peak. Once, indeed, she thought the sound of oars was again to be heard, and much nearer than before; yet no effort of her

quick and roving sight could detect the position of the boat. To all these doubts succeeded an alarm which sprang from a new and very different source.

The existence of the inlet which united the ocean with the waters of the Cove was but little known, except to the few whose avocations kept them near the spot. The pass being much more than half the time closed, its varying character, and the little use that could be made of it under any circumstances, prevented the place from being a subject of general interest with the coasters. Even when open, the depth of its water was uncertain, since a week or two of calms or of westerly winds would permit the tides to clean its channel, while a single easterly gale was sufficient to choke the entire inlet with sand. No wonder, then, that Alida felt an amazement which was not quite free from superstitious alarm, when, at that hour and in such a scene, she saw a vessel gliding, as it were, unaided by sails or sweeps, out of the thicket that fringed the ocean side of the Cove into its very center.

The strange and mysterious craft was a brigantine of that mixed construction which is much used even in the most ancient and classical seas of the other hemisphere, and which is supposed to unite the advantages of both a square and of a fore-and-aft rigged vessel, but which is nowhere seen to display the same beauty of form, and symmetry of equipment, as on the coasts of this Union. The first and smallest of its masts had all the complicated machinery of a ship, with its superior and inferior spars, its wider reaching though light and manageable yards, and its various sails, shaped and arranged to meet every vicissitude and caprice of the winds, while the latter, or larger of the two, rose like the straight trunk of a pine from the hull, simple in its cordage, and spreading a single sheet of canvas that in itself was sufficient to drive the fabric with vast velocity through the water.

The hull was low, graceful in its outlines, dark as the raven's wing, and so modeled as to float on its element like a sea-gull riding the billows. There were many delicate and attenuated lines among its spars which were intended to spread broader folds of canvas to the light airs when necessary; but these additions to the tracery of the machine, which added so much to its beauty by day, were now, seen as it was by the dimmer and more treacherous rays of the moon, scarcely visible. In short, as the vessel had entered the Cove floating with the tide, it was so singularly graceful and fairy-like in form that Alida at first was fain to discredit her senses, and to believe it no more than some illusion of the fancy. Like most others, she was ignorant of the temporary inlet, and, under the circumstances, it was not difficult to lend a momentary credence to so pleasing an idea.

But the delusion was only momentary. The brigantine turned in its course, and gliding into the part of the Cove where the curvature of the shores offered most protection from the winds and waves, and perhaps from curious eyes, its motion ceased. A heavy plunge in the water was audible even at the villa, and Alida then knew that an anchor had fallen into the bay.

Although the coast of North America offered little to invite lawless depredation, and it was in general believed to be so safe, yet the possibility that cupidity might be invited by the retired situation of her uncle's villa did not fail to suggest itself to the mind of the young heiress. Both she and her guardian were reputed to be wealthy; and disappointment on the open sea might drive desperate men to the commission of crimes that in more prosperous moments would not suggest themselves. The freebooters were said to have formerly visited the coast of the neighboring island, and men were just commencing those excavations for hidden treasures and secreted booty which have been, at distant intervals, continued to our own time.

There are situations in which the mind insensibly gives credit to impressions that the reason in common disapproves. The present was one in which Alida de Barberie, though of a resolute, and even a musculine understanding, felt disposed to believe there might be truth in those tales

that she had hitherto heard only to deride. Still keeping her eye on the motionless vessel, she drew back into her window, and wrapped the curtain round her form, undecided whether to alarm the family or not, and acting under a vague impression that, though so distant, her person might be seen. She was hardly thus secreted before the shrubbery was violently agitated, a footstep was heard in the lawn beneath her window, and one leaped so lightly into the balcony, and from the balcony into the center of the room, that the passage of the figure seemed like the flitting of some creature of supernatural attributes.

CHAPTER IX.

"Why look you, how you stare!
I would be friends with you and have your love."
—SHYLOCK.

THE first impulse of Alida, at this second invasion of her pavilion, was certainly to flee. But timidity was not her weakness, and as natural firmness gave her time to examine the person of the individual who had so unceremoniously entered, curiosity aided in inducing her to remain. Perhaps a vague, but a very natural expectation that she was again to dismiss the commander of the *Coquette*, had its influence on her first decision. In order that the reader may judge how far this boldness was excusable, we shall describe the person of the intruder.

The stranger was one in the very bud of young and active manhood. His years could not have exceeded two-and-twenty, nor would he probably have been thought so old had not his features been shaded by a rich brown hue, that in some degree served as a foil to a natural complexion, which though never fair, was still clear and blooming. A pair of dark, bushy, and jet-black silken whiskers, that were in singular contrast to eyelashes and brows of feminine beauty and softness, aided also in giving a decided expression to a face that might otherwise have been wanting in some of that character which is thought essential to comeliness in man. The forehead was smooth and low; the nose, though prominent and bold in outline, of exceeding delicacy in detail; the mouth and lips full, a little inclined to be arch, though the former appeared as if it might at times be pensive; the teeth were even and unsullied, and the chin was small, round, dimpled, and so carefully divested of the distinguishing mark of the sex that one could fancy Nature had contributed all its growth to adorn the neighboring cheeks and temples.

If to these features be added a pair of full and brilliant coal-black eyes, that appeared to vary their expression at their master's will, the reader will at once see that the privacy of Alida had been invaded by one whose personal attractions might, under other circumstances, have been dangerous to the imagination of a female whose taste was in some degree influenced by a standard created by her own loveliness.

The dress of the stranger was as unique as his personal attractions were extraordinary. The fashion of the garments resembled that of those already described as worn by the man who has announced himself as Master Tiller; but the materials were altogether richer, and, judging only from the exterior, more worthy of the wearer.

The light frock was of a thick purple silk, of an Indian manufacture, cut with exceeding care to fit the fine outlines of a form that was rather round than square, active than athletic. The loose trousers were of a fine white jean, the cap of scarlet velvet, ornamented with gold, and the body was belted with a large cord of scarlet silk, twisted in the form of a ship's cable. At the ends of the latter, little anchors wrought in bullion were attached as gay and fitting appendages.

In contrast to an attire so whimsical and uncommon, however, a pair of small and richly-mounted pistols were at the stranger's girdle; and the haft of a curiously carved Asiatic dagger was seen projecting rather ostentatiously from between the folds of the upper garment.

"What cheer! what cheer!" cried a

voice that was more in harmony with the appearence of the speaker than the rough, professional salutation that he uttered so soon as he had fairly landed in the center of Alida's little saloon. "Come forth, my dealer in the covering of the beaver, for here is one who brings gold to thy coffers. Ha! now that this trio of lights hath done its office, it may be extinguished lest it pilot others to the forbidden haven!"

"Your pardon, sir," said the mistress of the pavilion, advancing from behind the curtain with an air of coolness that her beating heart had nigh betrayed to be counterfeit; "having so unexpected a guest to entertain, the additional candles are necessary."

The start, recoil, and evident alarm of the intruder, lent Alida a little more assurance; for courage is a quality that appears to gain force in a degree proportioned to the amount in which it is abstracted from a dreaded object. Still, when she saw a hand on a pistol, the maiden was again about to flee; nor was her resolution to remain confirmed until she met the mild and alluring eye of the intruder, as, quitting his hold of the weapon, he advanced with an air so mild and graceful as to cause generosity to take the place of fear.

"Though Alderman Van Beverout be not punctual to his appointment," said the gay young stranger, "he has more than atoned for his absence by the substitute he sends. I hope she comes authorized to arrange the whole of our treaty?"

"I claim no right to hear or to dictate in matters not my own. My utmost powers extend to expressing a desire that this pavilion may be exempt from the discussion of affairs as much beyond my knowledge as they are separated from my interests."

"Then why this signal?" demanded the stranger, pointing with a serious air to the lights that still burned near each other in face of an open widow. "It is awkward to mislead in transactions that are so delicate!"

"Your allusion, sir, is not understood. These lights are no more than what are usually seen in my apartment at this hour, with, indeed, the addition of a lamp left by my uncle, Alderman Van Beverout."

"Your uncle!" exclaimed the other, advancing so near Alida as to cause her to retreat a step, his countenance expressing a deep and newly-awakened interest—"your uncle! This then is one far-famed and justly extolled, la belle Barberie!" he added, gallantly lifting his cap, as if he had just discovered the condition and the unusual personal attractions of his companion.

It was not in nature for Alida to be displeased.

All her fancied causes of terror were forgotten; for, in addition to their improbable and uncertain nature, the stranger had sufficiently given her to understand that he was expected by her uncle. If we add, that the singular attraction and softness of his face and voice aided in quieting her fears, we shall probably do no violence either to the truth or to a very natural feeling. Profoundly ignorant of the details of commerce, and accustomed to hear its mysteries extolled as exercising the keenest and best faculties of man, she saw nothing extraordinary in those who were actively engaged in the pursuit having reason for concealing their movements from the jealousy and rivalry of competitors. Like most of her sex, she had great dependence on the characters of those she loved; and though nature, education, and habit had created a striking difference between the guardian and his ward, their harmony had never been interrupted by any breach of affection.

"This, then, is la belle Barberie!" repeated the young sailor, for such his dress denoted him to be, studying her features with an expression of face in which pleasure vied with evident and touching melancholy. "Fame hath done no injustice, for here is all that might justify the folly or madness of man!"

"This is familiar dialogue for an utter stranger," returned Alida, blushing, though the quick, dark eye that seemed to fathom all her thoughts saw it was not in anger. "I do not deny that the part

ality of friends, coupled with my origin, have obtained the appellation which is given, however, more in playfulness than in any serious opinion of its being merited —and now, as the hour is getting late, and this visit is at least unusual, you will permit me to seek my uncle."

"Stay!" interrupted the stranger; "it is long—very long, since so soothing, so gentle a pleasure has been mine! This is a life of mysteries, beautiful Alida, though its incidents seem so vulgar and of every-day occurrence. There is mystery in its beginning and its end; in its impulses; its sympathies, and all its discordant passions. No, do not quit me. I am from off the sea, where none but coarse and vulgar-minded men have long been my associates; and thy presence is a balm to a bruised and wounded spirit."

Interested, if possible, more by the touching and melancholy tones of the speaker, than by his extraordinary language, Alida hesitated. Her reason told her that propriety, and even prudence, required she should apprise her uncle of the stranger's presence; but propriety and prudence lose much of their influence when female curiosity is sustained by a secret and powerful sympathy. Her own eloquent eye met the open and imploring look of organs that seemed endowed with the fabled power to charm; and while her judgment told her there was so much to alarm, her senses pleaded powerfully in behalf of the gentle mariner.

"An unexpected guest of my uncle's will have leisure to repose, after the privations and hardships of so weary a voyage," she said. "This is a house whose door is never closed against the rites of hospitality."

"If there is aught about my person or attire to alarm you," returned the stranger, earnestly, "speak that it may be cast away—these arms—these foolish arms, had better not have been here," he added, casting the pistols and daggers indignantly through a window into the shrubbery; "ah! if you knew how unwillingly I would harm any—and, least of all, a woman—you would not fear me!"

"I fear you not," returned la Belle, firmly. "I dread the misconceptions of the world."

"What world is here to disturb us? Thou livest in thy pavilion, beautiful Alida, remote from towns and envy, like some favored damsel, over whose happy and charmed life presides a benignant genius. See, here are all the pretty materials with which thy sex seeks innocent and happy amusement. Thou touchest this lute, when melancholy renders thought pleasing; here are colors to mock, or to eclipse, the beauties of the fields and the mountains, the flower and the tree; and from these pages are culled thoughts, pure and rich in imagery, as thy spirit is spotless, and thy person lovely!"

Alida listened in amazement; for while he spoke, the young mariner touched the different articles he named, with a melancholy interest, which seemed to say how deeply he regretted that fortune had placed him in a profession in which their use was nearly denied.

"It is not common for those who live on the sea to feel this interest in the trifles which constitute a woman's pleasure," she said, lingering, spite of her better resolution to depart.

"The spirit of our rude and boisterous trade is then known to you?"

"It were not possible for the relation of a merchant, so extensively known as my uncle, to be ignorant altogether of mariners."

"Aye, there is proof of it," returned the stranger, speaking so quick as again to betray how sensitively his mind was constructed. "The history of the American Buccaneers is a rare book to be found in a lady's library? What pleasure can a mind like that of la belle Barberie find in these recitals of bloody violence?"

"What pleasure, truly!" returned Alida, half tempted by the wild and excited eye of her companion, notwithstanding all the contradictory evidence which surrounded him, to believe he was one of the very rovers in question. "The book was lent me by a brave seaman, who holds himself in readiness to suppress their depredations; and while reading of so much wickedness, I endeavor to recall the devo-

tion of those who risk their lives in order to protect the weak and innocent. My uncle will be angered should I longer delay to apprise him of your presence."

"A single moment! It is long—very long, since I entered a sanctuary like this! Here is music, and there the frame of the gaudy tambour—these windows look on a landscape, soft as thy own nature; and yonder ocean can be admired without dreading its terrific power, or feeling disgust at its coarser scenes. Thou shouldst be happy here!"

The stranger turned and perceived that he was alone. Disappointment was strongly painted on his handsome face; but, ere there was time for second thought, another voice was heard grumbling at the door of the saloon.

"Compacts and treaties! What, in the name of good faith, hath brought thee hither? Is this the way to keep a cloak on our movements? or dost suppose that the Queen will knight me for being known as thy correspondent?"

"Lanterns and false beacons!" returned the other, mimicking the voice of the discontented burgher, and pointing to the lights that still stood where last described. "Can the port be entered without respecting the landmarks and signals?"

"This comes of moonlight and sentiment! When the girl should have been asleep, she is up and gazing at the stars, and disconcerting a burgher's speculation. But fear thee not, Master Seadrift; my niece has discretion, and if we have no better pledge for her silence, there is that of necessity; since there is no one here for a confidant, but her old Norman valet and the Patroon of Kinderhook, both of whom are dreaming of other matter than a little gainful traffic."

"Fear thee not, Alderman," returned the other, still maintaining his air of mockery. "We have the pledge of character, if no other; since the uncle cannot part with reputation, without the niece sharing in the loss."

"What sin is there in pushing commerce a step beyond the limits of the law? These English are a nation of monopolists; and they make no scruple of tying us of the colonies hand and foot, heart and soul, with their acts of Parliament, saying, 'With us shalt thou trade or not at all.' By the character of the best burgomaster of Amsterdam, and they came by the province, too, in no such honesty that we should lie down and obey!"

"Wherein there is much comfort to a dealer in the contraband. Justly reasoned, my worthy Alderman. Thy logic will at any time make a smooth pillow, especially if the adventure be not without its profit. And now, having so commendably disposed of our bargain, let us approach its legitimate, if not its lawful, conclusion. There," he added, drawing a small bag from an inner pocket of his frock, and tossing it carelessly on a table; "there is thy gold. Eighty broad Johannes is no bad return for a few packages of furs; and even avarice itself will own that six months is no long investment for the usury."

"That boat of thine, most lively Seadrift, is a marine humming-bird!" returned Myndert, with a joyful tremor of the voice, that betrayed his deep and entire satisfaction. "Did'st say just eighty? But spare thyself the trouble of looking for the memorandum; I will tell the gold myself, to save the trouble. Truly the adventure hath not been bad! a few kegs of Jamaica, with a little powder and lead, and a blanket or two, with now and then a penny bauble for a chief, are knowingly, aye! and speedily transmuted into the yellow metal, by thy good aid. This affair was managed on the French coast?"

"More northward, where frost helped the bargain. The beavers and martens, honest burgher, will be flaunting in the presence of the Emperor at the next holidays. What is there in the face of the Braganza that thou studiest it so hard?"

"The piece seems none of the heaviest—but, luckily, I have scales at hand——"

"Hold!" said the stranger, laying his hand, which, according to a fashion of that day, was clad in a delicate and scented glove, lightly on the arm of the other; "no scales between us, sir! That was taken in return for thy adventure; heavy or light, it must go down. We

deal in confidence, and this hesitation offends me. Another such doubt of my integrity, and our connection is at an end."

"A calamity I should deplore quite or nearly as much as thyself," returned Myndert, affecting to laugh; though he slipped the suspected doubloon into the bag again, in a manner that at once removed the object of contention from view. "A little particularity in the balance part of commerce serves us to maintain friendships. But a trifle shall not cause us to waste the precious time. Hast brought goods suited to the colonies?"

"In plenty."

"And ingeniously assorted? Colonists and monopoly! But there is a twofold satisfaction in this clandestine traffic; I never get the notice of thy arrival, Master Seadrift, but the heart within me leapeth of gladness! There is a double pleasure in circumventing the legislation of your London wiseacres!"

"The chiefest of which is—"

"A goodly return for the investment, truly; I desire not to deny the agency of natural causes; but, trust me, there is a sort of professional glory in thus defeating the selfishness of our rulers. What! are we born of woman to be used as the instruments of their prosperity! Give us equal legislation, a right to decide on the policy of enactments, and, then, like a loyal obedient subject——"

"Thou would still deal in the contraband!"

"Well, well; multiplying idle words is not multiplying gold. The list of the articles introduced can be forthcoming?"

"It is here, and ready to be examined. But there is a fancy come over me, Alderman Van Beverout, which, like others of my caprices, thou knowest must have its way. There should be a witness to our bargain."

"Judges and juries! Thou forgettest, man, that a clumsy galiot could sail through the tightest clause of these extra-legal compacts. The courts receive the evidence of this sort of traffic as the grave receives the dead; to swallow all and be forgotten."

"I care not for the courts, and little desire do I feel to enter them. But the presence of la belle Barberie may serve to prevent any misconceptions that might bring our connection to a permanent close. Let her be summoned."

"The girl is altogether ignorant of traffic, and it might unsettle her opinions of her uncle's stability. If a man does not maintain credit within his own doors, how can he expect it in the streets?"

"Many have credit on the highway who receive none at home. But thou knowest my humor; no niece—no traffic."

"Alida is a dutiful and affectionate child, and I would not willingly disturb her slumbers. Here is the Patroon of Kinderhook, a man who loves English legislation as little as myself; he will be less reluctant to see an honest shilling turned into gold. I will awake him; no man was ever yet offended at an offer to share in a profitable adventure."

"Let him sleep on. I deal not with your lords of manors and mortgages. Bring forth the lady, for there will be matter fit for her delicacy."

"Duty and the ten commandments! You never had the charge of a child, Master Seadrift, and cannot know the weight of responsibility——"

"No niece—no traffic!" interrupted the willful dealer in contraband, returning his invoice to his pocket, and preparing to rise from the table, where he had already seated himself. "The lady knows of my presence; and it were safer for us both that she entered more deeply into our confidence."

"Thou art as desperate as the English navigation-law! I hear the foot of the child still pacing her chamber, and she shall come. But there need be no explanations, to recall old intercourse. The affair can pass as a bit of accidental speculation—a by-play, in the traffic of life."

"As thou pleasest. I shall deal less in words than in business. Keep thine own secrets, burgher, and they are safe. Still I would have the lady, for there is a presentiment that our connection is in danger."

"I like not that word presentiment," grumbled the Alderman, taking a light and snuffing it with deliberate care; "drop but a single letter, and one dreams of the pains and penalities of the Exchequer. Remember thou art a trafficker, who conceals his appearance on account of the cleverness of his speculations."

"That is my calling, to the letter. Were all others as clever, the trade would certainly cease. Go, bring the lady."

The Alderman, who probably saw the necessity of making some explanation to his niece, and who, it would seem, fully understood the positive character of his companion, no longer hesitated; but, first casting a suspicious glance out of the still open window, he left the room.

CHAPTER X.

"Alack, what heinous sin is it in me,
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners."
—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE moment the stranger was again alone, the entire expression of his countenance underwent a change. The reckless and bold expression deserted his eye, which once more became soft, if not pensive, as it wandered over the different elegant objects that served to amuse the leisure of la belle Barberie. He arose and touched the strings of a lute, and then, like fear, started back, as if recoiling at the sound he had made. All recollection of the object of his visit was evidently forgotten in a new and livelier interest; and had there been one to watch his movements, the last motive imputed to his presence would probably have been the one that was true. There was so little of that vulgar and common character which is usually seen in men of his pursuit, in the gentle aspect and subdued air of his fine features, that it might be fancied he was thus singularly endowed by Nature in order that deception might triumph. If there were moments when a disregard of opinion was seen in his demeanor, it rather appeared assumed than easy; and even when most disposed to display lawless indifference to the ordinary regulations of society, in his interview with the Alderman, it had been blended with a reserve of manner that was strangely in contrast with his humor.

On the other hand, it were idle to say that Alida de Barberie had no unpleasant suspicions concerning the character of her uncle's guest. That baneful influence which necessarily exerts itself near an irresponsible power, coupled with the natural indifference with which the principal regards the dependent, had caused the English ministry to fill too many of their posts of honor and profit in their colonies with needy and dissolute men of rank, or of high political connections at home.

The Province of New York had, in this respect, been singularly unfortunate. The gift of it by Charles to his brother and successor had left it without the protection of those charters and other privileges that had been granted to most of the governments of America. The connection with the Crown was direct, and for a long period the majority of the inhabitants were considered of a different race, and of course as of one less to be considered than that of their conquerors. Such was the laxity of the times on the subject of injustice to the people of this hemisphere, that the predatory expeditions of Drake and others against the wealthy occupants of the more southern countries seem to have left no spots on their escutcheons; and the honors and favors of Queen Elizabeth had been liberally extended to men who would now be deemed freebooters. In short, that system of violence and specious morality which commenced with the gifts of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the bulls of the Popes, was continued with more or less of modification, until the descendants of those single-minded and virtuous men who peopled the Union took the powers of government into their own hands, and proclaimed political ethics that were previously as little practiced as understood.

Alida knew that both the Earl of Bellamont and the unprincipled nobleman who

has been introduced in the earlier pages of this tale, had not escaped the imputation of conniving at acts on the sea far more flagrant than any of an unlawful trade; and it will therefore create little surprise that she saw reason to distrust the legality of some of her uncle's speculations with less pain than might be felt by one of her sex and opinions at the present hour. Her suspicions, however, fell far short of the truth; for it were scarce possible to have presented a mariner who bore about him fewer of those signs of his rude calling than he whom she had so unexpectedly met.

Perhaps, too, the powerful charm that existed in the voice and countenance of one so singularly gifted by nature, had its influence in persuading Alida to reappear. At all events, she was soon seen to enter the room with an air that manifested more of curiosity and wonder than of displeasure.

"My niece has heard that thou comest from the old countries, Master Seadrift," said the wary Alderman, who preceded Alida, "and the woman is uppermost in her heart. Thou wilt never be forgiven should the eye of any maiden in Manhattan get sight of thy finery before she has passed judgment on its merit."

"I cannot wish a more impartial or a fairer judge," returned the other, doffing his cap in the gallant and careless manner of his trade. "Here are silks from the looms of Tuscany, and Lyonnois brocades, that any Lombard or dame of France might envy. Ribbons of every hue and dye, and laces that seem to copy the fretwork of the richest cathedral of your Fleming!"

"Thou hast journeyed much in thy time, Master Seadrift, and speakest of countries and usages with understanding," said the Alderman. "But how stand the prices of these precious goods? Thou knowest the long war, and moral certainty of its continuance; this German succession to the throne, and the late earthquakes in the country, too, have much unsettled prices, and cause us thoughtful burghers to be wary in our traffic. Didst inquire the cost of geldings when last in Holland?"

"The animals go a-begging! As to the value of my goods, that, you know, is fixed; for I admit of no parley between friends."

"Thy obstinacy is unreasonable, Master Seadrift. A wise merchant will always look to the state of the market, and one so practiced should know that a nimble sixpence multiplies faster than a slow-moving shilling. 'Tis the constant rolling of the ball that causes the snow to cleave! Goods that come light should not go heavy, and quick settlements follow sudden bargains. Thou knowest our York saying, that 'First offers are the best.'"

"He that likes may purchase, and he that prefers his gold to fine laces, rich silks, and stiff brocades, has only to sleep with his money bag under his pillow. There are others who wait with impatience to see the articles; and I have not crossed the Atlantic with a freight that scarcely ballasts the brigantine, to throw away the valuables on the lowest bidder."

"Nay, uncle," said Alida, in a little trepidation, "we cannot judge of the quality of Master Seadrift's articles by report. I dare say he has not landed without a sample of his wares?"

"Customs and friendships!" muttered Myndert; "of what use is an established correspondence if it is to be broken on account of a little cheapening? But produce thy stores, Mr. Dogmatism; I warrant me the fashions are of some rejected use, or that the color of the goods be impaired by the usual negligence of thy careless mariners. We will at least pay thee the compliment to look at the effects."

"'Tis as you please," returned the other. "The bales are in the usual place at the wharf, under the inspection of honest Master Tiller—but if so inferior in quality, they will scarce repay the trouble of the walk."

"I'll go, I'll go," said the Alderman, adjusting his wig and removing his spectacles; "'twould not be treating an old correspondent well to refuse to look at his samples—thou wilt follow, Master Seadrift, and so I will pay thee the compliment

"To me it does not seem that I am a creature so terrific that thou need'st dread my presence," continued the gay mariner.

—*The Water Witch.*

to examine the effects—though the long war, the glut of furs, the overabundance of the last year's harvests, and the perfect quiet in the mining districts, have thrown all commerce flat on the back. I'll go, however, lest thou shouldst say thy interests were neglected. Thy Master Tiller is an indiscreet agent; he gave me a fright to-day that exceeds any alarm I have felt since the failure of Van Halt, Balance and Liddle."

The voice of Myndert became inaudible, for, in his haste not to neglect the interests of his guest, the tenacious trader had already quitted the room, and half of his parting speech was uttered in the antechamber of the pavilion.

"'Twould scarce comport with the propriety of my sex to mingle with the seamen, and the others who doubtless surround the bales," said Alida, in whose face there was a marked expression of hesitation and curiosity.

"It will not be necessary," returned her companion. "I have, at hand, specimens of all that you would see. But why this haste? We are yet in the early hours of the night, and the Alderman will be occupied long, ere he comes to the determination to pay the prices my people are sure to ask. I am lately from all the sea, beautiful Alida, and thou canst not know the pleasure I find in breathing even the atmosphere of a woman's presence."

La belle Barberie retired a step or two, she knew not why; and her hand was placed upon the cord of the bell before she was aware of the manner in which she betrayed her alarm.

"To me it does not seem that I am a creature so terrific that thou needst dread my presence," continued the gay mariner, with a smile that expressed as much of secret irony as of that pensive character which had again taken possession of his countenance; "but ring, and bring your attendants to relieve fears that are natural to thy sex, and therefore seducing to mine. Shall I pull the cord? for this pretty hand trembles too much to do its office."

"I know not that any would answer, for it is past the hour of attendance; it is better that I go to the examination of the bales."

The strange and singularly attired being, who occasioned so much uneasiness to Alida, regarded her a moment with a kind and melancholy solicitude.

"Thus they are all till altered by too much intercourse with a cold and corrupt world!" he rather whispered, than uttered aloud. "Would that thus they might all continue! Thou art a singular compound of thy sex's weakness and of manly resolution, belle Barberie; but trust me," and he laid his hand on his heart with an earnestness that spoke well for his sincerity; "ere word, or act, to harm or to offend thee should proceed from any one who obeys will of mine, nature itself must undergo a change. Start not, for I call one to show the specimens you would see."

He then applied a little silver whistle to his lips and drew a low signal from the instrument, motioning to Alida to await the result without alarm. In half a minute there was a rustling among the leaves of the shrubbery, a moment of attentive pause, and then a dark object entered the window, and rolled heavily to the center of the floor.

"Here are our commodities, and trust me, the price shall not be dwelt on between us," resumed Master Seadrift, undoing the fastenings of the little bale that had entered the saloon seemingly without the aid of hands. "These goods are so many gages of neutrality between us; so approach and examine without fear. You will find some among them to well reward the hazard."

The bale was now open, and as its master appeared to be singularly expert in suiting a female fancy, it appeared impossible for Alida to resist any longer. She gradually lost her reserve, as the examination proceeded; and before the owner of the treasures had got into the third of his packages the hands of the heiress were as actively employed as his own in gaining access to their view.

"This is stuff of the Lombard territories," said the vender of the goods, pleased with the confidence he had

ceeded in establishing between his beautiful customer and himself. "Thou seest it is rich, flowery and variegated as the land it came from. One might fancy the vines and vegetation of that deep soil were shooting from this labor of the loom—nay, the piece is sufficient for any toilet, however ample; see, it is endless as the plains that reared the animal who supplies the texture. I have parted of that fabric to many dames of England, who have not disdained to traffic with one that risks much in their behalf."

"I fear there are many who find pleasure in these stuffs, chiefly because their use is forbidden."

"'Twould not be out of nature! Look; this box contains ornaments of the elephant's tooth, cut by a cunning artificer in the far Eastern lands; they do not disfigure a lady's dressing table, and have a moral, for they remind her of countries where the inhabitants are less happy than at home. Ah! here is a treasure of Mechlin, wrought in a fashion of my own design."

"'Tis beautifully fancied, and might do credit to one who professed the painter's art."

"My youth was much employed in these conceits," returned the trader, unfolding the rich and delicate lace, in a manner to show he had still a pleasure in contemplating its texture and quality. "There was a compact between me and the maker, that enough should be furnished to reach from the high church-tower of his town to the pavement beneath; and yet, you see how little remains! The London dames found it to their taste, and it was not easy to bring even this trifle into the colonies."

"You chose a remarkable measure for an article that was to visit so many different countries without the formalities of law!"

"We thought to start in the favor of the Church, which rarely frowns on those who respect its privileges. Under the sanction of such authority, I will lay aside all that remains, certain it will be needed for thy use."

"So rare a manufacture should be costly?"

La belle Barberie spoke hesitatingly, and as she raised her eyes, they met the dark organs of her companion, fixed on her face in a manner that seemed to express a consciousness of the ascendency he was gaining. Startled at she knew not what, the maiden again added hastily—

"This may be fitter for a court lady than a girl of the colonies."

"None who have yet worn it so well become it; I lay it here as a make-weight in my bargain with the Alderman. This is satin of Tuscany; a country where nature exhibits its extremes, and one whose merchants were princes. Your Florentine was subtle in his fabrics, and happy in his conceits of forms and colors, for which he stood indebted to the riches of his own climate. Observe—the hue of this glossy surface is scarcely so delicate as I have seen the rosy light, at even, playing on the sides of his Apennines!"

"You have then visited the regions in whose fabrics you deal?" said Alida, suffering the article to fall from her hand in the stronger interest she began to feel in their owner.

"'Tis my habit. Here have we a chain from the city of the Isles. The hand of a Venetian could alone form these delicate and nearly insensible links. I refused a string of spotless pearls for that same golden web."

"It was indiscreet in one who trades at so much hazard."

"I kept the bauble for my pleasure! Whim is something stronger than the thirst of gain; and this chain does not quit me until I bestow it on the lady of my love."

"One so actively employed can scarcely spare time to seek a fitting object for the gift."

"Is merit and loveliness in the sex so rare? La belle Barberie speaks in the security of many conquests, or she would not deal thus lightly in a matter that is so serious with most females."

"Among other countries your vessel hath visited a land of witchcraft, or you would not pretend to a knowledge of things, that, in their very nature, must be hidden from a stranger. Of what

value may be those beautiful feathers of the ostrich?"

"They came of swarthy Africa, though so spotless themselves. The bunch was had, by secret traffic, from a Moorish man, in exchange for a few skins of Lachryma Christi, that he swallowed with his eyes shut. I dealt with the fellow only in pity for his thirst, and do not pride myself on the value of the commodity. It shall go, too, to quicken love between me and thy uncle."

Alida could not object to this liberality, though she was not without a secret opinion that the gifts were no more than delicate and well-concealed offerings to herself. The effect of this suspicion was twofold: it caused the maiden to become more reserved in the expression of her tastes, though it in no degree lessened her confidence in, and admiration of, the wayward and remarkable trader.

"My uncle will have cause to commend thy generous spirit," said the heiress, bending her head a little coldly, at this repeated declaration of her companion's intentions, "though it would seem, that, in trade, justice is as much to be desired as generosity; this seemeth a curious design, wrought with the needle!"

"It is the labor of many a day, fashioned by the hand of a recluse. I bought it of a nun, in France, who passed years in toil upon the conceit, which is of more value than the material. The meek daughter of solitude wept when she parted with the fabric, for, in her eyes, it had the tie of association and habit. A companion might be lost to one who lives in the confusion of the world, and it should not cause more real sorrow than parting from the product of her needle gave that mild resident of the cloisters!"

"And is it permitted for your sex to visit those places of religious retirement?" asked Alida. "I come of a race that pays little deference to monastic life, for we are refugees from the severity of Louis; but yet I never heard my father charge these females with being so regardless of their vows."

"The fact was so repeated to me; for, surely, my sex are not admitted to traffic, directly, with the modest sisters" (a smile, that Alida was half-disposed to think bold, played about the handsome mouth of the speaker); "but it was so reported. What is your opinion of the merit of woman, in thus seeking refuge from the cares, and haply from the sins, of the world, in institutions of this order?"

"Truly the question exceedeth my knowledge. This is not a country to immure females, and the custom causes us of America little thought."

"The usage hath its abuses," continued the dealer in countraband, speaking thoughtfully; "but it is not without its good. There are many of the weak and vain that would be happier in the cloisters than if left to the seductions and follies of life. Ah! here is work of English hands. I scarcely know how the articles found their way into the company of the products of the foreign looms. My bales contain, in general, little that is vulgarly sanctioned by the law. Speak me frankly, belle Alida, and say if you share in the prejudices against the character of us freetraders?"

"I pretend not to judge of regulations that exceed the knowledge and practices of my sex," returned the maiden, with commendable reserve. "There are some who think the abuse of power a justification of its resistance, while others deem a breach of law to be a breach of morals."

"The latter is the doctrine of your man of invested moneys and established fortune! He has intrenched his gains behind acknowledged barriers, and he preaches their sanctity, because they favor his selfishness. We skimmers of the sea—"

Alida started so suddenly as to cause her companion to cease speaking.

"Are my words frightful, that you pale at their sound?"

"I hope they were used rather in accident than with their dreaded meaning. I would not have it said—no! 'tis but a chance that springs from some resemblance in your callings. One like you can never be the man whose name has grown into a proverb!"

"One like me, beautiful Alida, is much

as fortune wills. Of what man, or of what name, wouldst speak?"

"'Tis nothing," returned la belle Barberie, gazing unconsciously at the polished and graceful features of the stranger longer than was wont in maiden. "Proceed with your explanation; these are rich velvets!"

"They come of Venice, too; but commerce is like the favor which attends the rich, and the Queen of the Adriatic is already far on the decline. That which causes the increase of the husbandman occasions the downfall of a city. The lagunes are filling with fat soil, and the keel of the trader is less frequent there than of old. Ages hence, the plow may trace furrows where the Bucentaur has floated! The outer India passage has changed the current of prosperity, which ever rushes in the widest and newest track. Nations might learn a moral by studying the sleepy canals and magnificence of that fallen town; but pride fattens on its own lazy recollections, to the last! As I was saying, we rovers deal little in musty maxims, that are made by the great and prosperous at home, and are trumpeted abroad, in order that the weak and unhappy should be the more closely riveted in their fetters."

"Methinks you push the principle farther than is necessary for one whose greatest offense against established usage is a little hazardous commerce. These are opinions that might unsettle the world."

"Rather settle it by referring all to the rule of right. When governments shall lay their foundations in natural justice, when their object shall be to remove the temptations to err, instead of creating them, and when bodies of men shall feel and acknowledge the responsibilities of individuals—why, then the *Water-Witch* herself might become a revenue-cutter, and her owner an officer of the customs!"

The velvet fell from the hands of la belle Barberie, and she rose from her seat with precipitation.

"Speak plainly," said Alida, with all her natural firmness. "With whom am I about to traffic?"

"An outcast of society—a man condemned in the opinions of the world—the outlaw—the flagrant wanderer of the ocean—the lawless Skimmer of the Seas!" cried a voice at the open window.

In another minute, Ludlow was in the room. Alida uttered a shriek, veiled her face in her robe, and rushed from the apartment.

CHAPTER XI.

"Truth will come to light;
Murder cannot be hid long, a man's son may;
But in the end, truth will out."—LANCELOT.

THE officer of the Queen had leaped into the pavilion with the flushed features and all the hurry of an excited man. The exclamations and retreat of la belle Barberie, for a single moment, diverted his attention; then he turned, suddenly, not to say fiercely, toward her companion. It is not necessary to repeat the description of the stranger's person in order to render the change, which instantly occurred in the countenance of Ludlow, intelligible to the reader. His eye, at first, refused to believe there was no other present; and when it had, again and again, searched the whole apartment, it returned to the face and form of the dealer in contraband, with an expression of incredulity and wonder.

"Here is some mistake?" exclaimed the commander of the *Coquette*, after time had been given for a thorough examination of the room.

"Your gentle manner of entrance," returned the stranger, across whose face there had passed a glow that might have come equally of anger or of surprise, "has driven the lady from the room. But as you wear the livery of the Queen, I presume you have authority for invading the dwelling of the subject?"

"I had believed—nay, there was reason to be certain, that one whom all of proper loyalty execrate, was to be found here," stammered the still confused Ludlow. "There can scarce be a deception, for I plainly heard the discourse of my captors—and yet here is none."

"I thank you for the high consideration you bestow on my presence."

The manner, rather than the words, of the speaker, induced Ludlow to rivet another look on his countenance. There was a mixed expression of doubt, admiration, and possibly of uneasiness, if not of actual jealousy, in the eye, which slowly read all his lineaments, though the former seemed the stronger sensation of the three.

"We have never met before!" cried Ludlow, when the organ began to grow dim with the length and steadiness of its gaze.

"The ocean has many paths, and men may journey on them long without crossing each other."

"Thou hast served the Queen, though I see thee in this doubtful situation?"

"Never. I am not one to bind myself to the servitude of any woman that lives," returned the freetrader, while a mild smile played about his lip, "though she wore a thousand diadems; Anne never had an hour of my time nor a single wish of my heart."

"This is bold language, sir, for the ear of her officer. The arrival of an unknown brigantine, certain incidents which have occurred to myself this night, your presence here, that bale of articles forbidden by the law, create suspicions that must be satisfied. Who are you?"

"The flagrant wanderer of the ocean—the outcast of society—the condemned in the opinions of the world—the lawless Skimmer of the Seas!"

"This cannot be! The tongues of men speak of the personal deformity of that wanderer, no less than of his bold disregard of the law. You would deceive me."

"If then men err so much in that which is visible and unimportant," returned the other, proudly, "is there not reason to doubt their accuracy in matters of more weight? I am surely what I seem, if I am not what I say."

"I will not credit so improbable a tale; give me some proof that what I hear is true."

"Look at that brigantine, whose delicate spars are almost confounded with the background of trees," said the other, approaching the window, and directing the attention of his companion to the Cove; "'tis the bark that has so often foiled the efforts of all thy cruisers, and which transports me and my wealth whither I will, without the fetters of arbitrary laws, and the meddling inquiries of venal hirelings. The scud which floats above the sea is not freer than that vessel, and scarcely more swift. Well is she named the *Water-Witch!* for her performances on the wide ocean have been such as seem to exceed all natural means. The froth of the sea does not dance more lightly above the waves than yonder graceful fabric, when driven by the breeze. She is a thing to be loved, Ludlow; trust me, I never yet set affections on a woman with the warmth I feel for the faithful and beautiful machine!"

"This is little more than any mariner could say in praise of a vessel that he admired."

"Will you say the same of yon lumbering sloop of Queen Anne? Your *Coquette* is none of the fairest, and there was more of pretension than of truth at her christening."

"By the title of my royal mistress, young beardless, but there is an insolence in this language that might become him you wish to represent! My ship, heavy or light of foot as she may be, is fated to bring yonder false trader to the judgment."

"By the craft and qualities of the *Water-Witch!* but this language might become one who was at liberty to act his pleasure," returned the stranger, tauntingly imitating the tone in which his angry companion had spoken. "You would have proof of my identity: listen. There is one who vaunts his power that forgets he is a dupe of my agent; and that even while his words are so full of boldness he is a captive!"

The brown check of Ludlow reddened, and he turned toward the lighter and far less vigorous frame of his companion, as if about to strike him to the earth, when a door opened, and Alida appeared in the saloon.

The meeting between the commander of

the *Coquette* and his mistress was not without embarrassment. The anger of the former and the confusion of the latter, for a moment, kept both silent; but as la belle Barberie had not returned without an object, she was quick to speak.

"I know not whether to approve or to condemn the motive that has prompted Captain Ludlow to enter my pavilion at this unseasonable hour, and in so unceremonious a manner," she said, "for I am still ignorant of his motive. When he shall please to let me hear it, I may judge better of the merit of the excuse."

"True, we will hear his explanation before condemnation," added the stranger, offering a seat to Alida, which she coldly declined. "Beyond a doubt the gentleman has a motive."

If looks could have destroyed, the speaker would have been annihilated. But as the lady seemed indifferent to the last remark, Ludlow prepared to enter on his vindication.

"I shall not attempt to conceal that an artifice has been practiced," he said, "which is accompanied by consequences that I find awkward. The air and manner of the seaman, whose bold conduct you witnessed in the boat, induced me to confide in him more than was prudent, and I have been rewarded by deception."

"In other words, Captain Ludlow is not so sagacious as he had reason to believe," said an ironical voice at his elbow.

"In what manner am I to blame, or why is my privacy to be interrupted, because a wandering seaman has deceived the commander of the *Coquette?*" rejoined Alida. "Not only that audacious mariner, but this — this person," she added, adopting a word that use has appropriated to the multitude, "is a stranger to me. There is no other connection between us than that you see."

"It is not necessary to say why I landed," continued Ludlow, "but I was weak enough to allow that unknown mariner to quit my ship in my company; and when I would return, he found means to disarm my men, and make me a prisoner."

"And yet art thou, for a captive, tolerably free!" added the ironical voice.

"Of what service is this freedom, without the means of using it? The sea separates me from my ship, and my faithful boat's crew are in fetters. I have been little watched myself; but though forbidden to approach certain points, enough has been seen to leave no doubts of the character of those whom Alderman Van Beverout entertains."

"Thou wouldst also say, and his niece, Ludlow?"

"I would say nothing harsh to, or disrespectful of, Alida de Barberie. I will not deny that a harrowing idea possessed me; but I see my error, and repent having been too hasty."

"We may then resume our commerce," said the trader, coolly seating himself before the open bale, while Ludlow and the maiden stood regarding each other in mute surprise. "It is pleasant to exhibit those forbidden treasures to an officer of the Queen. It may prove the means of gaining the royal patronage. We were last among the velvets, and on the lagunes, of Venice. Here is one of a color and quality to form a bridal dress for the Doge himself, in his nuptials with the sea! We men of the ocean look upon that ceremony as a pledge Hymen will not forget us, though we may wander from his altars. Do I justice to the faith of the craft, Captain Ludlow?—or are you a sworn devotee of Neptune, and content to breathe your sighs to Venus, when afloat? Well, if the damps and salt air of the ocean rust the golden chain, it is the fault of cruel nature! Ah! here is——"

A shrill whistle sounded among the shubbery, and the speaker became mute. Throwing his cloths carelessly on the bale, he rose again, and seemed to hesitate. Throughout the interview with Ludlow the air of the freetrader had been mild, though at times it was playful; and not for an instant had he seemed to return the resentment which the other had so plainly manifested. It now became perplexed, and, by the workings of his features, it would seem that he vacillated in his opinions. The sounds of the whistle were again heard.

"Aye, aye, Master Tom," muttered

the dealer in contraband. "Thy note is audible, but why this haste? Beautiful Alida, this shrill summons is to say that the moment of parting is arrived!"

"We met with less of preparation," returned la belle Barberie, who preserved all the distant reserve of her sex, under the jealous eyes of her admirer.

"We met without a warning, but shall our separation be without a memorial? Am I to return with all these valuables to the brigantine, or in their place must I take the customary golden tribute?"

"I know not that I dare make a traffic which is not sanctioned by the law in presence of a servant of the Queen," returned Alida, smiling. "I will not deny that you have much to excite a woman's envy; but our royal mistress might forget her sex, and show little pity, were she to hear of my weakness."

"No fear of that, lady. 'Tis they who are most stern in creating these harsh regulations that show most frailty in their breach. By the virtues of honest Leadenhall itself, but I should like to tempt the royal Anne in her closet with such a display of goodly laces and heavy brocades!"

"That might be more hazardous than wise!"

"I know not. Though seated on a throne, she is but woman. Disguise nature as thou wilt, she is a universal tyrant, and governs all alike. The head that wears a crown dreams of the conquest of the sex, rather than of the conquest of states; the hand that wields the scepter is fitted to display its prettiness with the pencil or the needle; and though words and ideas may be taught and sounded forth with the pomp of royalty, the tone is still that of woman."

"Without bringing into question the merits of our present royal mistress," said Alida, who was a little apt to assert her sex's rights, "there is the example of the glorious Elizabeth to refute this charge."

"Aye, we have had our Cleopatras in the sea fight, and fear was found stronger than love! The sea has monsters, and so may have the land. He that made the earth gave it laws that 'tis not good to break. We men are jealous of our qualities, and little like to see them usurped; and trust me, lady, she who forgets the means that nature bestows, may mourn in sorrow over the fatal error. But shall we deal in velvet, or is your taste more leaning to brocade?"

Alida and Ludlow listened in admiration to the capricious and fanciful language of the unaccountable trader, and both were equally at a loss to estimate his character. The equivocal air was in general well maintained, though the commander of the *Coquette* had detected an earnestness and feeling in his manner when he more particularly addressed la belle Barberie that excited an uneasiness he was ashamed to admit, even to himself. That the maiden herself observed this change might also be inferred from a richer glow which diffused itself over her features, though it is scarcely probable that she was conscious of its effects. When questioned as to her determination concerning his goods, she again regarded Ludlow, doubtingly, ere she answered.

"That you have not studied woman in vain," she laughingly replied, "I must fain acknowledge. And yet, ere I make a decision, suffer me to consult those who, being more accustomed to deal with the laws, are better judges of the propriety of the purchases."

"If this request were not reasonable in itself, it were due to your beauty and station, lady, to grant it. I leave the bale in your care; and before the morrow's sun has set, one will await the answer. Captain Ludlow, are we to part in friendship, or does your duty to the Queen proscribe the word?"

"If what you seem," said Ludlow, "you are a being inexplicable! If this be some masquerade, as I half suspect, 'tis well maintained at least, though not worthily assumed."

"You are not the first who has refused credit to his senses in a matter wherein the *Water-Witch* and her commander have been concerned. Peace, honest Tom; thy whistle will not hasten Father Time! Friend or not, Captain Ludlow need not be told he is my prisoner."

"That I have fallen into the power of a miscreant——"

"Hist! if thou hast love of bodily ease and whole bones, Master Tom Tiller is a man of rude humor, and as little likes contumely as another. Besides, the honest mariner did but obey my orders, and his character is protected by a superior responsibility."

"Thy orders!" repeated Ludlow, with an expression of eye and lip that might have offended one more disposed to take offense than him he addressed. "The fellow who so well succeeded in his artifice is one much more likely to command than to obey. If any here be the Skimmer of the Seas, it is he."

"We are no more than the driving spray which goes whither the winds list. But in what hath the man offended that he finds so little favor with the Queen's Captain? He has not had the boldness to propose a secret traffic with so loyal a gentleman?"

"'Tis well, sir; you choose a happy occasion for this pleasantry. I landed to manifest the respect that I feel for this lady, and I care not if the world knows the object of the visit. 'Twas no silly artifice that led me hither."

"Spoken with the frankness of a seaman!" said the inexplicable dealer in contraband, though his color lessened, and his voice appeared to hesitate. "I admire this loyalty in man to woman; for as custom has so strongly fettered them in the expression of their inclinations, it is due from us to leave as little doubt as possible of our intentions. It is difficult to think that la belle Barberie can do wiser than to reward so much manly admiration."

The stranger cast a glance, which Alida fancied betrayed solicitude, as he spoke, at the maiden, and he appeared to expect she would reply.

"When the time shall come for a decision," returned the half-pleased and yet half-offended subject of his allusion, "it may be necessary to call upon very different counselors for advice. I hear the step of my uncle. Captain Ludlow, I leave it to your discretion to meet him or not."

The heavy footstep was approaching through the outer rooms of the pavilion. Ludlow hesitated; cast a reproachful look at his mistress; then he instantly quitted the apartment by the place through which he had entered. A noise in the shrubbery sufficiently proved that his return was expected, and that he was closely watched.

"Noah's Ark, and our grandmothers!" exclaimed Myndert, appearing at the door with a face red with his exertions. "You have brought us the cast-off finery of our ancestors, Master Seadrift. Here are stuffs of an age that is past, and they should be bartered for gold that hath been spent."

"What now! what now!" responded the freetrader, whose tone and manner seemed to change at will, in order to suit the humor of whomsoever he was brought to speak with. "What now, pertinacious burgher, that thou shouldst cry down wares that are but too good for these distant regions! Many is the English duchess who pines to possess but the tithe of these beautiful stuffs I offer thy niece, and faith—rare is the English duchess that would become them half so well!"

"The girl is seemly, and thy velvets and brocades are passable, but the heavy articles are not fit to offer to a Mohawk Sachem. There must be a reduction in prices, or the invoice cannot pass."

"The greater the pity. But if sail we must, sail we will! The brigantine knows the channel over the Nantucket sands; and my life on it! the Yankees will find others than the Mohawks for chapmen."

"Thou art as quick in thy notions, Master Seadrift, as the boat itself. Who said that a compromise might not be made when the discussion was prudently and fairly exhausted? Strike off the odd florins, leave the balance in round thousands, and thy trade is done for the season!"

"Not a stiver. Here, count me back the faces of the Braganza; throw enough of thin ducats into the scales to make up the sum, and let thy slaves push inland with the articles before the morning light comes to tell the story. Here has been

one among us who may do mischief, if he will; though I know not how far he is master of the main secret."

Alderman Van Beverout stared a little wildly about him, adjusted his wig, like one fully conscious of the value of appearances in this world, and then cautiously drew the curtains before the windows.

"I know of none more than common, my niece excepted," he said, when all these precautions had been observed. "'Tis true, the Patroon of Kinderhook is in the house; but as the man sleeps, he is a witness in our favor. We have the testimony of his presence, while his tongue is silent."

"Well, be it so," rejoined the freetrader, reading, in the imploring eyes of Alida, a petition that he would say no more. "I knew by instinct there was one unusual, and it was not for me to discover that he sleeps. There are dealers on the coast, who, for the sake of insurance, would charge his presence in their bills."

"Say no more, worthy Master Seadrift, and take the gold. To confess the truth, the goods are in the periagua and fairly out of the river. I knew we should come to conclusions in the matter, and time is precious, as there is a cruiser of the Queen so nigh. The rogues will pass the pennant, like innocent market-people, and I'll risk a Flemish gelding against a Virginia nag, that they inquire if the Captain has no need of vegetables for his soup! Ah, ha, ha, ha! That Ludlow is a simpleton, niece of mine, and he is not yet fit to deal with men of mature years. You'll think better of his qualities one day, and bid him begone like an unwelcome dun."

"I hope these proceedings may be legally sanctioned, uncle?"

"Sanctioned! Luck sanctions all. It is in trade as in war: success gives character and booty in both. Your rich dealer is sure to be your honest dealer. Plantations and orders in council! What are our rulers doing at home, that they need be so vociferous about a little contraband? The rogues will declaim by the hour concerning bribery and corruption, while more than half of them get their seats as clandestinely—aye, and as illegally, as you get these rare Mechlin laces. Should the Queen take offense at our dealings, Master Seadrift, bring me another season or two as profitable as the last, and I'll be your passenger to London, go on 'Change, buy a seat in Parliament, and answer to the royal displeasure from my place, as they call it. By the responsibility of the States General! but I should expect, in such a case, to return Sir Myndert, and then the Manhattanese might hear of a Lady Van Beverout, in which case, pretty Alida, thy assets would be sadly diminished!—so go to thy bed, child, and dream of fine laces and rich velvets, and duty to old uncles, and discretion, and all manner of agreeable things; kiss me, jade, and to thy pillow."

Alida obeyed, and was preparing to quit the room, when the freetrader presented himself before her with an air at once so gallant and respectful that she could scarce take offense at the freedom.

"I should fail in gratitude," he said, "were I to part from so generous a customer without thanks for her liberality. The hope of meeting again will hasten my return."

"I know not that you are my debtor for these thanks," returned Alida, though she saw that the Alderman was carefully collecting the contents of the bale, and that he had already placed three or four of the most tempting of its articles on her dressing-table. "We cannot be said to have bargained."

"I have parted with more than is visible to vulgar eyes," returned the stranger, dropping his voice, and speaking with an earnestness that caused his auditor to start. "Whether there will be a return for the gift, or perhaps I had better call it loss, time and my stars must show."

He then took her hand, and raised it to his lips, by an action so graceful and so gentle as not to alarm the maiden until the freedom was done. La belle Barberie reddened to her forehead, seemed disposed to condemn the liberty, frowned, smiled, and courtesying in confusion, withdrew.

Several minutes passed in profound silence after Alida had disappeared. The stranger was thoughtful, though his

bright eye kindled as if merry thoughts were uppermost; and he paced the room entirely heedless of the existence of the Alderman. The latter, however, soon took occasion to remind his companion of his presence.

"No fear of the girl's prating," exclaimed the Alderman when his task was ended. "She is an excellent and dutiful niece; and here, you see, is a balance on her side of the account that would shut the mouth of the First Lord of the Treasury. I disliked the manner in which you would have the child introduced; for, look you, I do not think that either Monsieur Barberie, or my late sister, would altogether approve of her entering into traffic so very young; but what is done, is done; and the Norman himself could not deny that I have made a fair set-off, of very excellent commodities, for his daughter's benefit. When dost mean to sail, Mr. Seadrift?"

"With the morning tide. I little like the neighborhood of these meddling guarda-costas."

"Bravely answered! Prudence is a cardinal quality in a private trader; and it is a quality that I esteem in Master Skimmer, next to his punctuality. Dates and obligations! I wish half of the firms, of three and four names, without counting the Co.'s, were as much to be depended on. Dost not think it safer to repass the inlet under favor of the darkness?"

"'Tis impossible. The flood is entering it like water through a race-way, and we have the wind at east. But, fear not; the brigantine carries no vulgar freight, and your commerce has given us a swept hold. The Queen and the Braganza, with Holland ducats, may show their faces even in the Royal Exchequer itself! we have no want of passes, and the *Miller's-Maid* is just as good a name to hail by as the *Water-Witch*. We begin to tire of this constant running, and have half a mind to taste the pleasures of your Jersey sports for a week. There should be shooting on the upper plains."

"Heaven forbid! Heaven forbid! Master Seadrift. I had all the deer taken for the skins, ten years ago; and as to birds, they deserted us to a pigeon when the last tribe of the savages went west of the Delaware. Thou hast discharged thy brigantine to better effect than thou couldst ever discharge thy fowling-pieces. I hope the hospitality of the Lust in Rust is no problem—but blushes and curiosity! I could wish to keep a fair countenance among my neighbors. Art sure the impertinent masts of the brigantine will not be seen above the trees when the day comes? This Captain Ludlow is no laggard when he thinks his duty actually concerned."

"We shall endeavor to keep him quiet. The cover of the trees, and the berth of the boat, make all snug, as respects his people. I leave worthy Tiller to settle balances between us; and so, I take my leave. Master Alderman, a word at parting. Does the Viscount Cornbury still tarry in the provinces?"

"Like a fixture. There is not a mercantile house in the colony more firmly established."

"There are unsettled affairs between us—a small premium would buy the obligations——"

"Heaven keep thee, Master Seadrift, and pleasant voyages back and forth! As for the Viscount's responsibility—the Queen may trust him with another Province, but Myndert Van Beverout would not give him credit for a tail of a marten; and so, again, Heaven preserve thee!"

The dealer in contraband appeared to tear himself from the sight of all the little elegances that adorned the apartment of la belle Barberie with reluctance. His adieus to the Alderman were rather cavalier, for he still maintained a cold and abstracted air; but as the other scarcely observed the forms of decorum in his evident desire to get rid of his guest, the latter was finally obliged to depart. He disappeared by the low balcony, where he had entered.

When Myndert Van Beverout was alone, he shut the windows of the pavilion of his niece, and retired to his own part of the dwelling. Here the thrifty burgher first busied himself in making sundry calculations, with a zeal that proved how

much his mind was engrossed by the occupation. After this preliminary step, he gave a short but secret confidence to the mariner of the India-shawl, during which there was much clanking of gold pieces. But when the latter retired, the master of the villa first looked to the trifling securities which were then, as now, observed in the fastenings of an American country-house; when he walked forth upon the lawn, like one who felt the necessity of breathing the open air. He cast more than one inquiring glance at the windows of the room which was occupied by Oloff Van Staats, where all was happily silent; at the equally immovable brigantine in the Cove; and at the more distant and still motionless hull of the cruiser of the crown. All around him was in the quiet of midnight. Even the boats which he knew to be plying between the land and the little vessel at anchor were invisible; and he re-entered his habitation, with the security one would be apt to feel under similar circumstances, in a region so little tenanted, and so little watched, as that in which he lived.

CHAPTER XII.

"Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand,
That you, yet, know not of."
—MERCHANT OF VENICE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the active movements which had taken place in and around the buildings of the Lust in Rust during the night which ended with our last chapter, none but the initiated were in the smallest degree aware of their existence. Oloff Van Staats was early afoot; and when he appeared on the lawn to scent the morning air, there was nothing visible to give rise to a suspicion that aught extraordinary had occurred during his slumbers. La Cour des Fees was still closed, but the person of the faithful Francois was seen, near the abode of his young mistress, busied in some of those pretty little offices that can easily be imagined would be agreeable to a maiden of her years and station. Van Staats of Kinderhook had as little of romance in his composition as could well be in a youth of five-and-twenty who was commonly thought to be enamored, and who was not altogether ignorant of the conventional sympathies of the passion. The man was mortal, and as the personal attractions of la belle Barberie were sufficiently obvious, he had not entirely escaped the fate which seems nearly inseparable from young fancy, when excited by beauty. He drew nigh to the pavilion, and, by a guarded but decisive maneuver, he managed to come so close to the valet as to render a verbal communication not only natural, but nearly unavoidable.

"A fair morning and a healthful air, Monsieur Francois," commenced the young Patroon, acknowledging the low salute of the domestic, by gravely lifting his own beaver. "This is a comfortable abode for the warm months, and one it might be well to visit oftener."

"When Monsieur le Patteron shall be de lor' of ce manoir, aussi, he shall come when he shall have la volonte," returned Francois, who knew that a pleasantry of his ought not to be construed into an engagement on the part of her he served, while it could not fail to be agreeable to him who heard it. "Monsieur de Van Staats est grand proprietaire sur la riviere, and one day, peut-etre, he shall be proprietaire sur la mer!"

"I have thought of imitating the example of the Alderman, honest Francois, and of building a villa on the coast; but there will be time for that when I shall find myself more established in life! Your young mistress is not yet moving, Francois?"

"Ma foi, non—Mam'selle Alide sleep! —'tis good symptome, Monsieur Patteron, pour les jeunes personnes, to tres bien sleep. Monsieur, et toute la famille de Barberie sleep a merveille! Oui, c'est toujours une famille remarquable pour le sommeil!"

"Yet one would wish to breathe this fresh and invigorating air, which comes from off the sea, like a balm in the early hours of the day."

"Sans doute, Monsieur. C'est un miracle, how Mam'selle love de air! Personne do not love air more, as Mam'selle

Alide. Bah!—it was grand plaisir to see how Monsieur de Barberie love de air!"

"Perhaps, Mr. Francois, your young lady is ignorant of the hour. It might be well to knock at the door, or perhaps at the window. I confess I should much admire to see her bright face smiling from the window on this soft morning scene."

It is not probable that the imagination of the Patroon of Kinderhook ever before took so high a flight; and there was reason to suspect by the wavering and alarmed glance that he cast around him after so unequivocal an expression of weakness, that he already repented his temerity. Francois, who would not willingly disoblige a man that was known to possess a hundred thousand acres of land, with manorial rights, besides personals of no mean account, felt embarrassed by the request; but was enabled to recollect in time that the heiress was known to possess a decision of character that might choose to control her own pleasures.

"Well, I shall be too happy to knock; mais, Monsieur sa is dat sleepest si agreable pour les jeunes personnes! On n'a jamais knock, dans la famille de Monsieur de Barberie, and je suis sur que Mam'selle Alide do not love to hear de knock—pourtant, si Monsieur le Patteron le veut, I shall consult ses—Viola! Monsieur Bevre, qui vient sans knock a la fenetre. J'ai l'honneur de vous laisser avec Monsieur Al'erman."

And so the complaisant but still considerate valet bowed himself out of a dilemma, that he found, as he muttered to himself while retiring, "tant soit peu ennuyant."

The air and manner of the Alderman, as he approached his guest, were like the character of the man, hale, hearty, and a little occupied with his own enjoyments and feelings. He hemmed thrice ere he was near enough to speak; and each of the strong expirations seemed to invite the admiration of the Patroon, for the strength of his lungs, and for the purity of the atmosphere around a villa which acknowledged him for its owner.

"Zephyrs and Spas! but this is the abode of health, Patroon!" cried the burgher, as soon as these demonstrations of his own bodily conditions had been sufficiently repeated. "One sometimes feels in this air equal to holding a discourse across the Atlantic with his friends at Scheveling or the Helder. A broad and deep chest, air like this from the sea, with a clear conscience and a lucky hit in the way of trade, cause the lungs of a man to play as easily and imperceptibly as the wings of a humming-bird. Let me see; there are few fourscore men in thy stock. The last Patroon closed the books at sixty-five; and his father went but a little beyond seventy. I wonder there never has been an intermarriage among you with the Van Courtlandts; that blood is as good as insurance to fourscore and ten of itself."

"I find the air of your villa, Mr. Van Beverout, a cordial that one could wish to take often," returned the other, who had far less of the brusque manner of the trader than his companion. "It is a pity that all who have the choice do not profit by their opportunities to breathe it."

"You allude to the lazy mariners in yon vessel! Her Majesty's servants are seldom in a hurry; and as for this brigantine in the Cove, the fellow seems to have got in by magic! I warrant me, now, the rogue is there for no good, and that the Queen's exchequer will be none the richer for his visit. Harkee, you Brom," calling to an aged black who was working at no great distance from the dwelling, and who was deep in his master's confidence, "'hast seen any boats plying between yonder roguish-looking brigantine and the land?"

The negro shook his head like the earthen image of a mandarin, and laughed loudly and heartily.

"I b'rieve he do all he mischief among a' Yankee, an' he only come here to take he breat," said the wily slave. "Well, I wish wid all a heart dere would come freetrader some time along our shore. Dat gib a chance to poor black man to make an honest penny!"

"You see, Patroon, human nature itself rises against monopoly! That was the voice of instinct speaking with the tongue

of Brom; and it is no easy task for a merchant to keep his dependents obedient to the laws which in themselves create so constant a temptation to break them. Well, well; we will always hope for the best, and endeavor to act like dutiful subjects. The boat is not amiss as to form and rig, let her come from where she will. Dost think the wind will be off the land this morning?"

"There are signs of a change in the clouds. One could wish that all should be out in the air to taste this pleasant sea breeze while it lasts."

"Come, come," cried the Alderman, who had for a moment studied the state of the heavens with a solicitude that he feared might attract his companion's attention. "We will taste our breakfast. This is the spot to show the use of teeth! The negroes have not been idle during the night, Mr. Van Staats—he-e-em—I say, sir, they have not been idle; and we shall have a choice among the dainties of the river and bay. That cloud about the mouth of the Raritan appears to rise, and we may yet have a breeze at west!"

"Yonder comes a boat in the direction of the city," observed the other, reluctantly obeying a motion of the Alderman to retire to the apartment where they were accustomed to break their fasts. "To me it seems to approach with more than ordinary speed."

"There are stout arms at its oars! Can it be a messenger for the cruiser? no —it rather steers more for our own landing. These Jerseymen are often overtaken by the night, between New York and their own doors. And now, Patroon, we will to our knives and forks, like men who have taken the best stomachics."

"And are we to refresh ourselves alone?" demanded the young man, who ever and anon cast sidelong and wistful glances at the closed and immovable shutters of la Cour des Fees.

"Thy mother hath spoiled thee, young Oloff; unless the coffee comes from a pretty female hand, it loses its savor. I take thy meaning, and think none the worse of thee; for the weakness is natural at thy years. Celibacy and independence! A man must get beyond forty, before he is ever sure of being his own master. Come hither, Master Francois. It is time my niece had shaken off this laziness, and shown her bright face to the sun. We wait for her fair services at the table. I see nothing of that lazy hussy, Dinah, any more than of her mistress."

"Assurement non, Monsieur," returned the valet. "Mam'selle Dinah do not love trop d'activite. Mais, Monsieur Al'erman, elles sont jeunes toutes les deux! Le sommeil est bien salutaire pour la jeunesse."

"The girl is no longer in her cradle, Francois, and it is time to rattle at the windows. As for the black minx, who should have been up and at her duty this hour, there will be a balance to settle between us. Come, Patroon; the appetite will not await the laziness of a willful girl; we will to the table. Dost think the wind will stand at west this morning?"

Thus saying, the Alderman led the way into the little parlor, where a neat and comfortable service invited them to break their morning fast. He was followed by Oloff Van Staats with a lingering step, for the young man really longed to see the windows of the pavilion open, and the fair face of Alida smiling amid the other beautiful objects of the scene. Francois proceeded to take such measures to arouse his mistress as he believed to comport with his duty to her uncle and his own ideas of bienseance. After some little delay, the Alderman and his guest took their seats at the table; the former loudly protesting against the necessity of waiting for the idle, and throwing in an occasional moral concerning the particular merit of punctuality in domestic economy, as well as in the affairs of commerce.

"The ancients divided time," said the somewhat pertinacious commentator, "into years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, and moments, as they divided numbers into units, tens, hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands; and both with an object. If we commence at the bottom, and employ well the moments, Mr. Van Staats, we turn the minutes into tens, the hours into hundreds, and the

weeks and months into thousands—aye! and when there is a happy state of trade, into tens of thousands! Missing an hour, therefore, is somewhat like dropping an important figure in a complex calculation, and the whole labor may be useless, for want of punctuality in one, as for want of accuracy in the other. Your father, the late Patroon, was what may be called a minute-man. He was as certain to be seen in his pew, at church, at the stroke of the clock, as to pay a bill when its items had been properly examined. Ah! it was a blessing to hold one of his notes, though they were far scarcer than broad pieces or bullion. I have heard it said, Patroon, that the manor is backed by plenty of Johannes and Dutch ducats!"

"The descendant has no reason to reproach his ancestors with want of foresight."

"Prudently answered; not a word too much nor too little—a principle on which all honest men settle their accounts. By proper management, such a foundation might be made to uphold an estate that should count thousands with the best of Holland or England. Growth and majority! Patroon; but we of the colonies must come to man's estate in time, like our cousins on the dykes of the Low Countries, or our rulers among the smithies of England. Erasmus, look at that cloud over the Raritan, and tell me if it rises."

The negro reported that the vapor was stationary; and, at the same time, by way of episode, he told his master that the boat which had been seen approaching the land had reached the wharf, and that some of its crew were ascending the hill toward the Lust in Rust.

"Let them come, of all hospitality," returned the Alderman, heartily; "I warrant me, they are honest farmers from the interior, a-hungered with the toil of the night. Go tell the cook to feed them with the best, and bid them welcome. And harkee, boy; if there be among them any comfortable yeoman, bid the man enter and sit at our table. This is not a country, Patroon, to be nice about the quality of the cloth the man has on his back, or whether he wears a wig or only his own hair. What is the fellow gaping at?"

Erasmus rubbed his eyes, and then showing his teeth to the full extent of a double row, that glittered like pearls, he gave his master to understand that the negro, introduced to the reader under the name of Euclid, and who was certainly his own brother of the half-blood, or by the mother's side, was entering the villa. The intelligence caused a sudden cessation of the masticating process in the Alderman, who had not, however, time to express his wonder ere two doors simultaneously opened, and Francois presented himself at the one, while the shining and doubting face of the slave from town darkened the other. The eyes of Myndert rolled first to this side, then to that, a certain misgiving of the heart preventing him from speaking to either; for he saw, in the disturbed features of each, omens that bade him prepare himself for unwelcome tidings. The reader will perceive, by the description we shall give, that there was abundant reason for the sagacious burgher's alarm.

The visage of the valet, at all times meager and long, seemed extended to far more than its usual dimensions, the under jaw appearing fallen and trebly attenuated. The light-blue protruding eyes were open to the utmost, and they expressed a certain confused wildness, that was none the less striking for the painful expression of mental suffering with which it was mingled. Both hands were raised, with the palms outward; while the shoulders of the poor fellow were elevated so high as entirely to destroy the little symmetry that nature had bestowed on that particular part of his frame.

On the other hand, the look of the negro was guilty, dogged and cunning. His eye leered askance, seeming to wish to play around the person of his master, as it will be seen his language endeavored to play around his understanding. The hands crushed the crown of a woolen hat between their fingers, and one of his feet described semi-circles with its toe, by performing nervous evolutions on its heel.

"Well!" ejaculated Myndert, regard-

ing each in turn. "What news from the Canadas? Is the Queen dead, or has she restored the Colony to the United Provinces?"

"Mam'selle Alide!" exclaimed, or rather groaned, Francois.

"The poor dumb beast!" muttered Euclid.

The knives and the forks fell from the hands of Myndert and his guest, as it were by a simultaneous paralysis. The latter involuntarily arose; while the former planted his solid person still more firmly in his seat, like one who was preparing to meet some severe and expected shock with all the physical resolution he could muster.

"What of my niece? What of my geldings? You have called upon Dinah?"

"Sans doute, Monsieur!"

"And you kept the keys of the stable?"

"I nebber let him go at all?"

"And you bade her call her mistress?"

"She made no answair, du tout."

"The animals were fed and watered, as I ordered?"

"'Em nebber take he food better!"

"You entered the chamber of my niece, yourself, to awake her?"

"Monsieur a raison."

"What the devil has befallen the innocent?"

"He lose he stomach quite, and I t'ink it great time 'fore it ebber come back."

"Mister Francois, I desire to know the answer of Monsieur Barberie's daughter."

"Mam'selle no repond, Monsieur; pas un syllabe!"

"Drenchers and fleames! The beauty should have been drenched and blooded——"

"He'm too late for dat, Masser, on honor."

"The obstinate hussy! This comes of her Huguenot breed, a race that would quit house and lands rather than change its place of worship!"

"La famille de Barberie est honorable, Monsieur, mais le Grand Monarque fut un peu trop exigeant. Vraiment, la dragonnade etait mal avisee, pour faire des chretiens!"

"Apoplexies and hurry! you should have sent for the farrier to administer to the sufferer, thou black hound!"

"'Em go for a butcher, Masser, to save he skin, for he war too soon dead."

The word dead produced a sudden pause. The preceding dialogue had been so rapid, and question and answer, no less than the ideas of the principal speaker, had got so confused that, for a moment, he was actually at a loss to understand whether the last great debt of nature had been paid by la belle Barberie or one of the Flemish geldings. Until now, consternation, as well as the confusion of the interview, had constrained the Patroon to be silent, but he profited by the breathing time to interpose.

"It is evident, Mr. Van Beverout," he said, speaking with a tremor in his voice which betrayed his own uneasiness, "that some untoward event has occurred. Perhaps the negro and I had better retire, that you may question Francois concerning that which hath befallen Mademoiselle Barberie, more at your leisure."

The Alderman was recalled from a profound stupor by this gentleman-like and considerate proposal. He bowed his acknowledgments, and permitted Mr. Van Staats to quit the room; when Euclid would have followed, he signed to the negro to remain.

"I may have occasion to question thee farther," he said, in a voice that had lost none of the compass and depth for which it was so remarkable. "Stand there, sirrah, and be in readiness to answer. And now, Mr. Francois, I desire to know why my niece declines taking breakfast with myself and my guest!"

"Mon Dieu, Monsieur, it is not possible y repondre. Les sentiments des demoiselles are nevair decides!"

"Go, then, and say to her, that my sentiments are decided to curtail certain bequests and devises, which have consulted her interests more than strict justice to others of my blood, aye, and even of my name, might dictate."

"Monsieur y reflechira. Mam'selle Alide be so young personne!"

"Old or young, my mind is made up;

and so to your Cour des Fees, and tell the lazy minx as much. Thou hast ridden that innocent, thou scowling imp of darkness!"

"Mais, pensez-y, je vous en prie, Monsieur. Mam'selle shall nevair se sauver encore; jamais, je vous en repond."

"What is the fellow jabbering about?" exclaimed the Alderman, whose mouth fell nearly to a degree that rendered the countenance of the valet so singularly expressive of distress. "Where is my niece, sir? and what means this allusion to her absence?"

"La fille de Monsieur de Barberie n'y est past!" cried Francois, whose heart was too full to utter more. The aged and affectionate domestic laid his hand on his breast, with an air of acute suffering; then, remembering the presence of his superior, he turned, bowed with a manner of profound condolence, struggled manfully with his own emotion, and succeeded in getting out of the room with dignity and steadiness.

It is due to the character of Alderman Van Beverout to say that the blow occasioned by the sudden death of the Flemish gelding lost some of its force in consequence of so unlooked-for a report concerning the inexplicable absence of his niece. Euclid was questioned, menaced, and even anathematized, more than once, during the next ten minutes; but the cunning slave succeeded in confounding himself so effectually with the rest of his connections of the half-blood, during the search which instantly followed the report of Francois, that his crime was partially forgotten.

On entering la Cour des Fees, it was, in truth, found to want her whose beauty and grace had lent its chief attraction. The outer rooms, which were small, and ordinarily occupied during the day by Francois and the negress called Dinah, and in the night by the latter only, were in the state in which they might be expected to be seen. The apartment of the attendant furnished evidence that its occupant had quitted it in haste, though there was every appearance of her having retired to rest at the usual hour. Clothes were scattered carelessly about; and though most of her personal effects had disappeared, enough remained to prove that her departure had been hurried and unforeseen.

On the other hand, the little saloon, and the dressing-room and bedroom of la belle Barberie, were in a state of the most studied arrangement. Not an article of furniture was displaced, a door ajar, or a window open. The pavilion had evidently been quitted by its ordinary passage, and the door had been closed in the customary manner, without using the fastenings. The bed had evidently not been entered, for the linen was smooth and untouched. In short, so complete was the order of the place, that, yielding to a powerful natural feeling, the Alderman called aloud on his truant niece, by name, as if he expected to see her appear from some place in which she had secreted her person, in idle sport. But this touching expedient was vain. The voice sounded hollow through the deserted rooms; and though all waited long to listen, there came no playful or laughing answer back.

"Alida!" cried the burgher, for the fourth and last time, "come forth, child; I forgive thee thy idle sport, and all I have said of disinheritance was but a jest. Come forth, my sister's daughter, and kiss thy old uncle!"

The Patroon turned aside, as he heard a man so known for his worldliness yielding to the power of nature; and the lord of a hundred thousand acres forget his own disappointment in the force of sympathy.

"Let us retire," he said, gently urging the burgher to quit the place. "A little reflection will enable us to decide what should be done."

The Alderman complied. Before quitting the place, however, its closets and drawers were examined; and the search left no further doubts of the step which the young heiress had taken. Her clothes, books, utensils for drawing, and even the lighter instruments of music, had disappeared.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Aye, that way goes the game,
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures."
—MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

THE tide of existence flows downward, and with it go, in their greatest strength, all those affections that unite families and kindred. We learn to know our parents in the fullness of their reason, and commonly in the perfection of their bodily strength. Reverence and respect both mingle with our love; but the affection with which we watch the helplessness of infancy, the interest with which we see the ingenuous and young profiting by our care, the pride of improvement, and the magic of hope, create an intensity of sympathy in their favor that almost equals the identity of self-love. There is a mysterious and double existence in the tie that binds the parent to the child. With a volition and passions of its own, the latter has power to plant a sting in the bosom of the former that shall wound as accurately as the errors which arise from mistakes, almost from crimes, of its own. But when the misconduct of the descendant can be traced to neglect, or to a vicious instruction, then, indeed, even the pang of a wounded conscience may be added to the sufferings of those who have gone before. Such, in some measure, was the nature of the pain that Alderman Van Beverout was condemned to feel, when at leisure to reflect on the ill-judged measure that had been taken by la belle Barberie.

"She was a pleasant and coaxing minx, Patroon," said the burgher, pacing the room they occupied, with a quick and heavy step, and speaking unconsciously of his niece as of one already beyond the interests of life; "and as willful and headstrong as an unbroken colt. Thou hard-riding imp! I shall never find a match for the poor, disconsolate survivor. But the girl had a thousand agreeable and delightful ways with her, that made her the delight of my old days. She has not done wisely to desert the friend and guardian of her youth, aye, even of her childhood; in order to seek protection from strangers. This is an unhappy world, Mr. Van Staats. All our calculations come to naught; and it is in the power of fortune to reverse the most reasonable and wisest of our expectations. A gale of wind drives the richly freighted ship to the bottom; a sudden fall in the market robs us of our gold, as the November wind strips the oak of its leaves; and bankruptcies and decayed credit often afflict the days of the oldest houses, as disease saps the strength of the body; Alida! Alida! thou hast wounded one that has never harmed thee, and rendered my age miserable!"

"It is vain to contend with the inclinations," returned the proprietor of the manor, sighing in a manner that did no discredit to the sincerity of his remark. "I could have been happy to have placed your niece in the situation that my respected mother filled with so much dignity and credit, but it is now too late——"

"We don't know that—we don't know that," interrupted the Alderman, who still clung to the hope of effecting the first great wish of his heart with the pertinacity with which he would have clung to the terms of any other fortunate bargain. "We should never despair, Mr. Van Staats, as long as the transaction is left open."

"The manner in which Mademoiselle Barberie has expressed her preference is so very decided that I see no hope of completing the arrangement."

"Mere coquetry, sir, mere coquetry! The girl has disappeared in order to enhance the value of her future submission. One should never regard a treaty at an end, so long as reasonable hopes remain that it may be productive to the parties."

"I fear, sir, there is more of the coquette in this step of the young lady than a gentleman can overlook," returned the Patroon a little dryly, and with far more point than he was accustomed to use. "If the commander of her Majesty's cruiser be not a happy man, he will not have occasion to reproach his mistress with disdain!"

"I am not certain, Mr. Van Staats, that in the actual situation of our stipulations,

I ought to overlook an innuendo that seems to reflect on the discretion of my ward. Captain Ludlow—well, sirrah! what is the meaning of this impertinence?"

"He'm waiting to see masser," returned the gaping Erasmus, who stood with the door in his hand, admiring the secret intelligence of his master, who had so readily anticipated his errand.

"Who is waiting? What does that simpleton mean?"

"I mean a gentle'um masser say."

"The fortunate man is here to remind us of his success," haughtily observed Van Staats, of Kinderhook. "There can be no necessity for my presence at an interview between Alderman Van Beverout and his nephew."

The justly mortified Patroon bowed ceremoniously to the equally disappointed burgher, and left the room the moment he had done speaking. The negro took his retreat as a favorable symptom for one who was generally known to be his rival; and he hastened to inform the young Captain that the coast was clear.

The meeting that succeeded was sufficiently constrained and awkward. Alderman Van Beverout assumed a manner of offended authority and wounded affection; while the officer of the Queen wore an air of compelled submission to a duty that he found to be disagreeable. The introduction of the discourse was consequently ceremonious, and punctiliously observant of courtesy.

"It has become my office," continued Ludlow, after the preliminaries had been observed, "to express the surprise I feel, that a vessel of the exceedingly equivocal appearance of the brigantine, that is anchored in the Cove, should be found in a situation to create unpleasant suspicions concerning the commercial propriety of a merchant so well known as Mr. Alderman Van Beverout."

"The credit of Myndert Van Beverout is too well established, Captain Cornelius Ludlow, to be affected by the accidental position of ships and bays. I see two vessels anchored near the Lust in Rust, and if called upon to give my testimony before the Queen in council, I should declare that the one which wears her royal pennant had done more wrong to her subjects than the stranger. But what harm is known of the latter?"

"I shall not conceal any of the facts; for I feel that this is a case in which a gentleman of your station has the fullest right to the benefit of explanations——"

"Hem!" interrupted the burgher, who disliked the manner in which his companion had opened the interview, and who thought he saw the commencement of a forced compromise in the turn it was taking. "Hem! I commend your moderation, Captain Ludlow. Sir, we are flattered in having a native of the Province in so honorable a command on the coast. Be seated, I pray you, young gentleman, that we may converse more at leisure. The Ludlows are an ancient and well-established family in the colonies; and though they were no friends of King Charles, why—we have others here in the same predicament. There are few crowns in Europe that might not trace some of their discontented subjects to these colonies; and the greater the reason, say I, why we should not be too hasty in giving faith to the wisdom of this European legislation. I do not pretend, sir, to admire all the commercial regulations which flow from the wisdom of her Majesty's counselors. Candor forbids that I should deny this truth: but—what of the brigantine in the Cove?"

"It is not necessary to tell one so familiar with the affairs of commerce, of the character of a vessel called the *Water-Witch*, nor that of its lawless commander, the notorious Skimmer of the Seas."

"Captain Ludlow is not going to accuse Alderman Van Beverout of a connection with such a man!" exclaimed the burgher, rising as it were involuntarily, and actually recoiling a foot or two, apparently under the force of indignation and surprise.

"Sir, I am not commissioned to accuse any of the Queen's subjects. My duty is to guard her interests on the water, to oppose her open enemies, and to uphold her royal prerogatives."

"An honorable employment, and one I

doubt not that is honorably discharged. Resume your seat, sir; for I foresee that the conference is likely to end as it should, between a son of the late very respectable king's counselor and his father's friend. You have reason then for thinking that this brigantine, which has so suddenly appeared in the Cove, has some remote connection with the Skimmer of the Seas?"

"I believe the vessel to be the famous *Water-Witch* itself, and her commander to be, of course, the well-known adventurer."

"Well, sir—well, sir—this may be so. It is impossible for me to deny it; but what should such a reprobate be doing here, under the guns of a queen's cruiser?"

"Mr. Alderman, my admiration of your niece is not unknown to you."

"I have suspected it, sir," returned the burgher, who believed the tenor of the compromise was getting clearer, but who still waited to know the exact value of the concessions the other party would make, before he closed a bargain in a hurry, of which he might repent at his leisure. "Indeed, it has even been the subject of some discourse between us."

"This admiration induced me to visit your villa the past night——"

"This is a fact too well established, young gentleman."

"Whence I took away—" Ludlow hesitated, as if anxious to select his words—

"Alida Barberie."

"Alida Barberie!"

"Aye, sir; my niece, or perhaps I should say my heiress, as well as the heiress of old Etienne de Barberie. The cruise was short, Captain Cornelius Ludlow; but the prize-money will be ample—unless, indeed, a claim to neutral privileges should be established in favor of part of the cargo."

"Sir, your pleasantry is amusing, but I have little leisure for its enjoyment. That I visited the Cour des Fees shall not be denied. I think la belle Barberie will not be offended, under the circumstances, with this acknowledgment."

"If she is, the jade has a rare squeamishness, after what has passed!"

"I pretend not to judge of more than my duty. The desire to serve my royal mistress had induced me, Mr. Van Beverout, to cause a seaman of odd attire and audacious deportment to enter the *Coquette*. You will know the man when I tell you that he was your companion on the island ferry-boat."

"Yes, yes, I confess there was a mariner of the long voyage there, who caused much surprise, and some uneasiness to myself and niece, as well as to Van Staats of Kinderhook."

Ludlow smiled like one not to be deceived, as he continued.

"Well, sir, this man so far succeeded as to tempt me to suffer him to land under the obligation of some half-extorted promise; we came into the river together, and entered your grounds in company."

Alderman Van Beverout now began to listen like a man who dreaded, while he desired to catch each syllable. Observing that Ludlow paused, and watched his countenance with a cool and steady eye, he recovered his self-command, and affected a mere ordinary curiosity, while he signed to him to proceed.

"I am not sure I tell Alderman Van Beverout anything that is new," resumed the young officer, "when I add that the fellow suffered me to visit the pavilion, and then contrived to lead me into an ambush of lawless men, having previously succeeded in making captives of my boat's crew."

"Seizures and warrants!" exclaimed the burgher, in his natural strong and hasty manner of speaking. "This is the first I have heard of the affair. It was ill-judged, to call it by no other term."

Ludlow seemed relieved when he saw by the undisguised amazement of his companion that the latter was, in truth, ignorant of the manner in which he had been detained.

"It might not have been, sir, had our watch been as vigilant as their artifice was deep," he continued. "But as I was little guarded, and having no means to reach my ship, I——"

"Aye, aye, Captain Ludlow; it is not necessary to be so circumstantial; you proceeded to the wharf, and——"

"Perhaps, sir, I obeyed my feelings

rather than my duty," observed Ludlow, coloring high, when he perceived that the burgher paused to clear his throat. "I returned to the pavilion, where——"

"You persuaded a niece to forget her duty to her uncle and protector."

"This is a harsh and most unjustifiable charge, both as respects the young lady and myself. I can distinguish between a very natural desire to possess articles of commerce that are denied by the laws, and a more deliberate and mercenary plot against the revenue of the country. I believe there are few of her years and sex who would refuse to purchase the articles I saw presented to the eyes of la belle Barberie, especially when the utmost hazard could be no more than their loss, as they were already introduced into the country."

"A just discrimination and one likely to render the arrangement of our little affairs less difficult! I was sure that my old friend, the Counselor, would not have left a son of his ignorant of principles, more especially as he was about to embark in a profession of so much responsibility. And so my niece had the imprudence to entertain a dealer in contraband?"

"Alderman Van Beverout, there were boats in motion on the water between this landing and the brigantine in the Cove. A periagua even left the river for the city at the extraordinary hour of midnight!"

"Sir, boats will move on the water, when the hands of men set them in motion; but what have I to answer for in the matter? If goods have entered the Province without license, why, they must be found and condemned; and if free-traders are on the coast they should be caught. Would it not be well to proceed to town, and lay the fact of this strange brigantine's presence before the Governor, without delay?"

"I have other intentions. If, as you say, goods have gone up the bay, it is too late for me to stop them; but it is not too late to attempt to seize yon brigantine. Now, I would perform this duty in a manner as little likely to offend any of reputable name, as my allegiance will admit."

"Sir, I extol this discretion—not that there is any testimony to implicate more than the crew, but credit is a delicate flower, and it should be handled tenderly. I see an opening for an arrangement; but, we will, as in duty bound, hear your propositions first; as you may be said to speak with the authority of the Queen. I will merely surmise that terms should be moderate, between friends; perhaps, I should say, between connections, Captain Ludlow."

"I am flattered by the word, sir," returned the young sailor, smiling with an expression of delight. "First suffer me to be admitted to the charming Cour des Fees but for a moment."

"That is a favor which can hardly be refused you, who may be said to have a right, now, to enter the pavilion at pleasure," returned the Alderman, unhesitatingly leading the way through the long passage to the deserted apartments of his niece, and continuing the blind allusions to the affairs of the preceding night, in the same indirect manner as had distinguished the dialogue during the whole interview. "I shall not be unreasonable, young gentleman, and here is the pavilion of my niece; I wish I could add, and here also is its mistress!"

"And is la belle Barberie no longer a tenant of la Cour des Fees," demanded Ludlow, in a surprise too natural to be feigned.

Alderman Van Beverout regarded the young man in wonder; pondered a moment to consider how far denying a knowledge of the absence of his niece might benefit the officer in the pending negotiations; and he dryly observed, "Boats passed on the water, during the night. If the men of Captain Ludlow were at first imprisoned, I presume they were set at liberty at the proper time."

"They are carried I know not whither; the boat itself is gone, and I am here alone."

"Am I to understand, Captain Ludlow, that Alida Barberie has not fled my house, during the past night, to seek a refuge in your ship?"

"Fled!" echoed the young man, in a voice of horror. "Has Alida de Barberie fled from the house of her uncle at all?"

"Captain Ludlow, this is not acting. On the honor of a gentleman, are you ignorant of my niece's absence?"

The young commander did not answer; but, striking his head fiercely, he smothered words that were unintelligible to his companion. When this momentary burst of feeling was past, he sank into a chair, and gazed about him in stupid amazement. All this pantomime was inexplicable to the Alderman, who, however, began to see that more of the conditions of the arrangement in hand were beyond the control of his companion than he had at first believed. Still the plot thickened, rather than grew clear; and he was afraid to speak, lest he might utter more than was prudent. The silence, therefore, continued for quite a minute, during which time the parties sat gazing at each other in dull wonder.

"I shall not deny, Captain Ludlow, that I believed you had prevailed on my niece to fly aboard the *Coquette;* for, though a man who has always kept his feelings in his own command, as the safest manner of managing particular interests, yet I am not to learn that rash youth is often guilty of folly. I am now equally at a loss with yourself to know what has become of her, since here she is not."

"Hold!" eagerly interrupted Ludlow. "A boat left your wharf for the city in the earlier hours of the morning. Is it not possible that she may have taken passage in it?"

"It is not possible. I have reasons to know—in short, sir, she is not there."

"Then is the unfortunate—the lovely—the indiscreet girl forever lost to herself and to us!" exclaimed the young sailor, groaning under his mental agony. "Rash, mercenary man! to what an act of madness has thirst of gold driven one so fair—would I could say, so pure and so innocent!"

But while the distress of the lover was thus violent, and caused him to be so little measured in his terms of reproach, the uncle of the fair offender appeared to be lost in surprise. Though la belle Barberie had so well preserved the decorum and reserve of her sex, as to leave even her suitors in doubt of the way her inclinations tended, the watchful Alderman had long suspected that the more ardent, open, and manly commander of the *Coquette* was likely to triumph over one so cold in exterior, and so cautious in his advances, as the Patroon of Kinderhook. When, therefore, it became apparent Alida had disappeared, he quite naturally inferred that she had taken the simplest manner of defeating all his plans for favoring the suit of the latter, by throwing herself, at once, into the arms of the young sailor. The laws of the colonies offered few obstacles to the legality of their union; and when Ludlow appeared that morning, he firmly believed that he beheld one, who, if he were not so already, was inevitably soon to become his nephew. But the suffering of the disappointed youth could not be counterfeited; and the perplexed Alderman seemed utterly at a loss to conjecture what could have become of his niece. Wonder, rather than pain, possessed him, and when he suffered his ample chin to repose on the finger and thumb of one hand, it was with the air of a man that revolved, in his mind, all the plausible points of some knotty question.

"Holes and corners!" he muttered, after a long silence; "the willful minx cannot be playing at hide and seek with her friends! The huzzy had ever too much of la famille de Barberie, and her high Norman blood about her, as that silly old valet has it, to stoop to such childish trifling. Gone she certainly is," he continued, looking again into the empty drawers and closets, "and with her the valuables have disappeared. The guitar is missing—the lute I sent across the ocean to purchase, an excellently-toned Dutch lute, that cost every stiver of a hundred guilders, is also wanting, and all the—hem—the recent accessions have disappeared. And there, too, are my sister's jewels, that I persuaded her to bring along, to guard against accidents while our backs are turned—they are not to be seen. Francois! Francois! Thou long-tried servitor of Etienne Bar-

berie, what the devil has become of thy mistress ? "

"Mais, Monsieur," returned the disconsolate valet, whose decent features exhibited all the signs of unequivocal suffering, "she no tell le pauvre Francois ! En supposant, que monsieur ask le Captaine, he shall problablement know."

The burgher cast a quick, suspicious glance at Ludlow, and shook his head, to express his belief that the young man was true.

"Go ; desire Mr. Van Staats of Kinderhook to favor us with his company."

"Hold," cried Ludlow, motioning to the valet to withdraw. "Mr. Beverout, an uncle should be tender to the errors of one so dear as this cruel, unreflecting girl. You cannot think of abandoning her to so frightful a fortune ? "

"I am not addicted to abandoning anything, sir, to which my title is just and legal. But you speak in enigmas. If you are acquainted with the place where my niece is secreted, avow it frankly, and permit me to take those measures which the case requires."

Ludlow reddened to his forehead, and he struggled powerfully with his pride and with his regrets.

"It is useless to attempt concealing the step which Alida Barberie has been pleased to take," he said, a smile so bitter passing over his features as to lend them the expression of severe mockery ; "she has chosen more worthily than either of us could have believed ; she has found a companion more suited to her station, her character, and her sex, than Van Staats of Kinderhook, or a poor commander of a queen's ship ! "

"Cruisers and manors ! What in the name of mysteries is thy meaning ? The girl is not here ; you declare she is not on board of the *Coquette*, and there remains only——"

"The brigantine ! " groaned the young sailor, uttering the word by a violent effort of the will.

"The brigantine ! " repeated the Alderman, slowly. "My niece can have nothing to do aboard a dealer in contraband. That is to say, Alida Barberie is not a trader."

"Alderman Van Beverout, if we wish to escape the contamination of vice, its society must be avoided. There was one in the pavilion of a mien and assurance the past night that might delude an angel. Ah ! woman ! woman ! thy mind is composed of vanities, and thy imagination is thy bitterest foe ! "

"Woman and vanities ! " echoed the amazed burgher. "My niece, the heiress of old Etienne Marie de Barberie, and the sought of so many of honorable names and respectable professions, to be a refugee with a rover—always supposing your opinions of the character of the brigantine to be just. This is a conjecture too improbable to be true."

"The eye of a lover, sir, may be keener than that of a guardian ; call it jealousy, if you wish—would to Heaven my suspicions were untrue!—but if she be not there, where is she ? "

The opinion of the Alderman seemed staggered. If la belle Barberie had not yielded to the fascinations of that wayward, but seductive eye and smile, to that singular beauty of face, and to the secret and often irresistible charm that encircles eminent personal attractions, when aided by mystery—to what had she yielded, and whither had she fled ?

These were the reflections that now began to pass through the thoughts of the Alderman as they had already planted stings in the bosom of Ludlow. With reflection, conviction began slowly to assert its power. But the truth did not gleam upon the mind of the calculating and wary merchant with the same instinctive readiness that it had flashed upon the jealous faculties of the lover. He pondered on each circumstance of the interview between the dealer in contraband and his niece ; recalled the manner and discourse of the former ; drew certain general and vague conjectures concerning the power which novelty, when coupled with circumstance of romance, might exercise over a female fancy ; and dwelt long and secretly on some important facts that were alone known to himself, before his judgment

finally settled down into the same opinion as that which his companion had formed, with all the sensitiveness of jealous alarm.

"Women and vagaries!" muttered the burgher, after his study was ended. "Their conceits are as uncertain as the profits of a whaling voyage, or the luck of a sportsman. Captain Ludlow, your assistance will be needed in this affair; and as it may not be too late, since there are few priests in the brigantine—always supposing her character to be what you affirm—my niece may yet see her error, and be disposed to reward so much assiduity and attachment."

"My services shall always be ready, so long as they can be useful to Alida Barberie," returned the young officer with haste, and yet a little coldly. "It will be time enough to speak of the reward when we shall have succeeded."

"The less noise that is made about a little domestic inconvenience like this, the better; and I would therefore suggest the propriety of keeping our suspicions of the character of the vessel as a secret until we shall be better informed."

The Captain bowed his assent to the proposal.

"And now that we are of the same mind in the preliminaries, we will seek the Patroon of Kinderhook, who has a claim to participate in our confidence."

Myndert then led the way from the empty and melancholy Cours des Fees, with a step that had regained its busy and firm tread, and a countenance that expressed far more of vexation and weariness than of real sorrow.

CHAPTER XIV.

I'll give thee a wind."
"Thou art kind."
"And I another."
"I myself have all the other."—MACBETH.

THE cloud above the mouth of the Raritan had not risen. On the contrary, the breeze still came from off the sea; and the brigantine in the Cove, with the cruiser of the Queen, still lay at their anchors, like two floating habitations that were not intended to be removed. The hour was that at which the character of the day becomes fixed; and there was no longer any expectation that a landwind would enable the vessel of the freetrader to repass the inlet before the turn of the tide, which was again running swiftly on the flood.

The windows of the Lust in Rust were open, as when its owner was present; and the menials were employed in and about the villa in their customary occupations; though it was evident, by the manner in which they stopped to converse, and by the frequent conferences which had taken place in secret corners, that they wondered none the less at the unaccountable disappearance of their young mistress. In all other respects, the villa and its grounds were, as usual, quiet and seemingly deserted.

But there was a group collected beneath the shade of an oak on the margin of the Cove, and at a point where it was rare for a man to be seen. This little party appeared to be in waiting for some expected communication from the brigantine; since they had taken post on the side of the inlet next the cape, and in a situation so retired as to be entirely hid from any passing observation of those who might enter or leave the mouth of the Shrewsbury.

In short, they were on the long, low, and narrow barrier of sand that now forms the projection of the Hook, and which, by the temporary breach that the Cove had made between its own waters and that of the ocean, was then an island.

"Snug should be the motto of a merchant," observed one of these individuals, whose opinions will sufficiently announce his name to the reader. "He should be snug in his dealings, and snug in his manner of conducting them; snug in his credits, and above all, snug in his speculations. There is as little need, gentlemen, in calling in the aid of a *posse-comitatus* for a sensible man to keep his household in order, as that a discreet trader should go whistling through the public markets, with the history of his operations. I gladly court two so worthy assistants as Captain Cornelius Ludlow and Mr. Oloff Van Staats; for I know there

will be no useless gossip concerning the trifling derangement that hath occurred. Ah! the black hath had communications with the freetrader—always supposing the opinion of Mr. Ludlow concerning the character of the vessel to be just—and he is quitting the brigantine."

Neither of the companions of the Alderman made any reply. Each watched the movement of the skiff that contained their messenger, and each seemed to feel an equal interest in the result of his errand. Instead, however, of approaching the spot where his master and his two friends expected him, the negro, though he knew that his boat was necessary to enable the party to recross the inlet, pulled directly for the mouth of the river—a course that was exactly contrary to the one he was expected to take.

"Rank disobedience!" grumbled the incensed master. "The irreverent dog is deserting us on this neck of barren sand, where we are cut off from all communication with the interior, and are as completely without the intelligence of the state of the market, and other necessaries, as men in a desert!"

"Here comes one that seems disposed to bring us to a parley," observed Ludlow, whose practiced eye had first detected a boat quitting the side of the brigantine, as well as the direction it was about to steer.

The young commander was not deceived; for a light cutter, that played like a bubble on its element, was soon approaching the shore where the three expectants were seated. When it was near enough to render sight perfectly distinct, and speech audible without an effort, the crew ceased rowing, and permitted the boat to lie in a state of rest. The mariner of the India-shawl then arose in the stern-sheets and examined the thicket behind the party with a curious and suspicious eye. After a sufficient search, he signed to his crew to force the cutter still nigher to the land, and spoke:

"Who has affairs with any of the brigantine?" he coolly demanded, wearing the air of one who had no reason to anticipate the object of their visit. "She has little left that can turn to profit, unless she parts with her beauty."

"Truly, good stranger," returned the Alderman, laying a sufficient emphasis on the latter word, "here are none disposed to a traffic, which might not be pleasing to the authorities of the country, were its nature known. We come with a desire to be admitted to a conference with the commander of the vessel, on a matter of especial but private concern."

"Why send a public officer on the duty? I see one, there, in the livery of Queen Anne. We are no lovers of her Majesty's servants, and would not willingly form disagreeable acquaintances."

Ludlow nearly bit through his lip, in endeavoring to repress his anger at the cool confidence of one who had already treated him with so little ceremony, and then momentarily forgetting his object, in professional pride, and perhaps we might add in the habits of his rank, he interrupted the dialogue.

"If you see the livery of the royal authority," he said haughtily, "you must be sensible it is worn by one who is commissioned to cause its rights to be respected. I demand the name and character of yon brigantine!"

"As for character, she is, like many another beauty, something vituperated; nay, some carry their envy so far as to call it cracked! But we are jolly mariners that sail her, and little heed crazy reports at the expense of our mistress. As for a name, we answer any hail that is fairly spoken, and well meant. Call us 'Honesty,' if you will, for want of the register."

"There is much reason to suspect your vessel of illegal practices; and, in the name of the Queen, I demand access to her papers, and the liberty of a free search into her cargo and crew. Else will there be necessity to bring her under the guns of the cruiser, which lies at no great distance, waiting only for orders."

"It takes no scholar to read our documents, Captain Ludlow; they are written by a light keel on the rolling waters, and he who follows in our wake may guess at

their authority. If you wish to overhaul our cargo, you must look sharply into the cuffs and aprons, the negligees and stomachers of the Governor's lady, at the next ball at the fort; or pry into the sail that is set above the farthingales of the wife and daughters of your Admiralty Judge! We are no cheesemongers, to break the shins of a boarding officer among boxes and butter tubs."

"Your brigantine has a name, sirrah; and, in her Majesty's authority, I demand to know it."

"Heaven forbid that any here should dispute the Queen's right! You are a seaman, Captain Ludlow, and have an eye for comeliness in a craft, as well as in a woman. Look at those harpings! There is no fall of a shoulder can equal that curve, in grace or richness; this shear surpasses the justness and delicacy of any waist; and there you see the transoms, swelling and rounded like the outlines of a Venus. Ah! she is a bewitching creature; and no wonder that, floating as she does, on the seas, they should have called her—"

"*Water-Witch!*" said Ludlow, finding that the other paused.

"You deserve to be one of the sisterhood yourself, Captain Ludlow, for this readiness in divination!"

"Amazement and surprise, Patroon!" exclaimed Myndert, with a tremendous hem. "Here is a discovery to give a respectable merchant more uneasiness than the undutiful conduct of fifty nieces! This vessel then is the famous brigantine of the notorious Skimmer of the Seas! a man whose misdeeds in commerce are as universally noted as the stoppage of a general dealer! Pray, Master Mariner, do not distrust our purposes. We do not come, sent by any authority of the country, to pry into your past transactions, of which it is quite unnecessary for you to speak; and far less to indulge in any unlawful thirst of gain, by urging a traffic that is forbidden by the law. We wish solely to confer with the celebrated freebooter and rover, who must, if your account be true, command the vessel, for a few minutes, on an affair of common interest to the three. This officer of the Queen is obliged, by his duty, to make certain demands of you, with which you will comply, or not, at your own good discretion; and since her Majesty's cruiser is so far beyond reach of bullet, it cannot be expected you will do otherwise; but further than that he has no present intention to proceed. Parley and civilities! Captain Ludlow, we must speak the man fair, or he will leave us to get over the inlet, and back to the Lust in Rust, as we may; and that, too, as empty-handed as we came. Remember our stipulations, without observing which I shall withdraw from the adventure altogether."

Ludlow bit his lip, and continued silent. The seaman of the shawl, or Master Tiller, as he has been more than once called, again narrowly examined the background, and caused his boat to approach so near the land that it was possible to step into it by the stern.

"Enter," he said to the Captain of the *Coquette*, who needed no second invitation; "enter, for a valuable hostage is a safe pledge in a truce. The Skimmer is no enemy to good company; and I have done justice to the Queen's servitor, by introducing him already, by name and character."

"Fellow, the success of your deception may cause you to triumph for a time; but remember that the *Coquette*——"

"Is a wholesome boat, whose abilities I have taken, to the admeasurement of her moment-glass," observed Tiller, very coolly taking the words out of the other's mouth. "But as there is business to be done with the Skimmer, we will speak more of this anon."

The mariner of the shawl, who had maintained his former audacious demeanor, now became grave; and he spoke to his crew with authority, bidding them pull the boat to the side of the brigantine.

The exploits, the mysterious character, and the daring of the *Water-Witch*, and of him who sailed her, were, in that day, the frequent subjects of anger, admiration, and surprise. Those who found pleasure in the marvelous, listened to th wonders that were recounted of her spe

and boldness with pleasure; they who had been so often foiled in their attempts to arrest the hardy dealers in contraband, reddened at her name; and all wondered at the success and intelligence with which her movements were controlled. It will, therefore, create no astonishment when we say, that Ludlow and the Patroon drew near to the light and graceful fabric with an interest that deepened at each stroke of the oars. So much of a profession which, in that age, was particularly marked and apart from the rest of mankind in habits and opinions, had been interwoven into the character of the former, that he could not see the just proportions, the graceful outlines of the hull, or the exquisite symmetry and neatness of the spars and rigging, without experiencing a feeling somewhat allied to that which undeniable superiority excites in the heart of even a rival. There was also a taste in the style of the merely ornamental parts of the delicate machine which caused as much surprise as her model and rig.

Seamen, in all ages, and in every state of their art, have been ambitious of bestowing on their floating habitations a style of decoration which, while appropriate to their element, should be thought somewhat analogous to the architectural ornaments of the land. Piety, superstition, and national usages affect these characteristic ornaments, which are still seen, in different quarters of the world, to occasion broad distinctions between the appearances of vessels. In one, the rudder-head is carved with the resemblance of some hideous monster; another shows goggling eyes and lolling tongues from its cat-heads; this has the patron saint, or the ever-kind Marie, embossed upon its moldings or bows; while that is covered with the allegorical emblems of country and duty. Few of these efforts of nautical art are successful; though a better taste appears to be gradually redeeming even this branch of human industry from the rubbish of barbarism, and to be elevating it to a state which shall do no violence to the more fastidious opinions of the age. But the vessel of which we write, though constructed at so remote a period, would have done credit to the improvements of our own time.

It has been said that the hull of this celebrated smuggler was low, dark, molded with exquisite art, and so justly balanced as to ride upon its element like a sea-fowl. For a little distance above the water it showed a blue that vied with the color of the deep ocean, the use of copper being then unknown; while the more superior parts were of a jet black, delicately relieved by two lines of a straw-color, that were drawn with mathematical accuracy, parallel to the plane of her upper works, and consequently converging slightly toward the sea, beneath her counter. Glossy hammock-cloths concealed the persons of those who were on the deck, while the close bulwarks gave the brigantine the air of a vessel equipped for war. Still the eye of Ludlow ran curiously along the whole extent of the two straw-colored lines, seeking in vain some evidence of the weight and force of her armament. If she had ports at all, they were so ingeniously concealed as to escape the keenest of his glances. The nature of the rig has been already described. Partaking of the double character of brig and schooner, the sails and spars of the forward-mast being of the former, while those of the after-mast were of the latter construction, seamen have given to this class of shipping the familiar name of hermaphrodites. But though there might be fancied by this term some want of the proportions that constitute seemliness, it will be remembered that the departure was only from some former rule of art, and that no violence had been done to those universal and permanent laws which constitute the charm of nature.

The models of glass which are seen representing the machinery of a ship are not more exact or just in their lines than were the cordage and spars of this brigantine. Not a rope varied from its true direction; not a sail, but it resembled the neat folds of some prudent housewife; not a mast or a yard was there, but it rose into the air, or stretched its arms, with the most fastidious attention to sym-

metry. All was airy, fanciful, and full of grace, seeming to lend to the fabric a character of unreal lightness and speed. As the boat drew near her side, a change of the air caused the buoyant bark to turn like a vane to its current; and as all the long and pointed proportions of her head-gear came into view, Ludlow saw beneath the bowsprit an image that might be supposed to make, by means of allegory, some obvious allusions to the character of the vessel. A female form, fashioned with the carver's best skill, stood on the projection of the cutwater. The figure rested lightly on the ball of one foot, while the other was suspended in an easy attitude, resembling the airy posture of the famous Mercury of the Bolognese. The drapery was fluttering, scanty, and of a light sea-green tint, as if it had imbibed a hue from the element beneath. The face was of that dark bronze color which human ingenuity has, from time immemorial, adopted as the best medium to portray a superhuman expression. The locks were disheveled, wild, and rich; the eye full of such a meaning as might be fancied to glitter in the organs of a sorceress; while a smile so strangely meaning and malign played about the mouth that the young sailor started when it first met his view, as if a living thing had returned his look.

"Witchcraft and necromancy!" grumbled the Alderman, as this extraordinary image came suddenly on his vision also. "Here is a brazen looking huzzy! and one who might rob the Queen's treasury itself, without remorse! Your eyes are young, Patroon; what is that the minx holds so impudently above her head?"

"It seems an open book, with letters of red written on its pages. One need not be a conjurer to divine it is no extract from the Bible."

"Nor from the statute books of Queen Anne. I warrant me 'tis a ledger of profit gained in her many wanderings. Goggling and leers! the bold air of the confident creature is enough to put an honest man out of countenance!"

"Wilt read the motto of the witch?" demanded he of the India-shawl, whose eye had been studying the detail of the brigantine's equipment, rather than attending to the object which so much attracted the looks of his companions. "The night air has tautened the cordage of that flying-jib-boom, fellows, until it begins to lift its nose like a squeamish cockney, when he holds it over salt water! See to it, and bring the spar in line; else we shall have a reproof from the sorceress, who little likes to have any of her limbs deranged. Here, gentlemen, the opinions of the lady may be read as clearly as woman's mind can ever be fathomed."

While speaking to his crew, Tiller had changed the direction of the boat; and it was soon lying, in obedience to a motion of his hand, directly beneath the wild and significant looking image just described. The letters in red were now distinctly visible; and when Alderman Van Beverout had adjusted his spectacles, each of the party read the following sentence:

> "Albeit I never lend nor borrow,
> By taking nor giving of excess,
> Yet to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
> I'll break a custom."—*Merchant of Venice.*

"The brazen!" exclaimed Myndert, when he had gone through this quotation from the immortal bard. "Ripe or green, one could not wish to be the friend of so impudent a thing; and then to impute such sentiments to any respectable commercial man, whether of Venice or Amsterdam! Let us board the brigantine, friend mariner, and end the connection ere foul mouths begin to traduce our motives for the visit."

"The overdriven ship plows the seas too deep for speed; we shall get into port in better season without this haste. Wilt take another look into the dark lady's pages? A woman's mind is never known at the first answer!"

The speaker raised the rattan he still carried and caused a page of painted metal to turn on hinges that were so artfully concealed as not to be visible. A new surface, with another extract, was seen.

"What is it, what is it, Patroon?" demanded the burgher, who appeared greatly to distrust the discretion of the sorceress.

"Follies and rhymes! but this is the way of the whole sex; when Nature has denied them tongues, they invent other means of speech."

"Porters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about;
Thrice to thine, and thrice to thine,
And thrice again to make up nine."

"Rank nonsense!" continued the burgher. "It is well for those who can, to add thrice and thrice to their store; but look you, Patroon—it is a thriving trade that can double the value of the adventure, and that with reasonable risks, and months of patient watching."

"We have other pages," returned Tiller, "but our affairs drag for want of attending to them. One may read much good matter in the book of the sorceress, when there is leisure and opportunity. I often take occasion, in the calms, to look into her volume; and it is rare to find the same moral twice told, as these brave seamen can swear."

The mariners at the oars confirmed this assertion by their grave and believing faces, while their superior caused the boat to quit the place, and the image of the Water-Witch was left floating in solitude above her proper element.

The arrival of the cutter produced no sensation among those who were found on the deck of the brigantine. The mariner of the shawl welcomed his companions frankly and heartily; and then he left them for a minute to make their observations, while he discharged some duty in the interior of the vessel. The moments were not lost, as powerful curiosity induced all the visitors to gaze about them, in the manner in which men study the appearance of any celebrated object, that has long been known only by reputation. It was quite apparent that even Alderman Van Beverout had penetrated farther into the mysteries of the beautiful brigantine than he had ever before been. But it was Ludlow who gathered most from this brief opportunity, and whose understanding glances so rapidly and eagerly ran over all that a seaman could wish to examine.

An admirable neatness reigned in every part. The planks of the deck resembled the work of the cabinet maker, rather than the coarser labor which is generally seen in such a place; and the same excellence of material, and exactness in the finish, were visible in the ceilings of the light bulwarks, the railings, and all the other objects which necessarily came conspicuously into view, in the construction of such a fabric. Brass was tastefully rather than lavishly used on many of those parts where metal was necessary; and the paint of the interior was everywhere a light and delicate straw-color. Armament there was none, or at least none visible; nor did the fifteen or twenty grave-looking seamen, who were silently lounging with folded arms about the vessel, appear to be those who would find pleasure in scenes of violence. They were, without an exception, men who had reached the middle age, of weather-worn and thoughtful countenances, many of them even showing heads that had begun to be grizzled more by time than even by exposure. Thus much Ludlow had been enabled to ascertain, ere they were rejoined by Tiller. When the latter again came on deck, he showed, however, no desire to conceal any of the perfections of his habitation.

"The willful sorceress is no niggard in accommodating her followers," said the mariner, observing the manner in which the Queen's officer was employed. "Here, you see, the Skimmer keeps room enough for an admiral in his cabins; and the fellows are berthed aft far beyond the foremast; wilt step to the hatch and look below?"

The Captain and his companions did as desired, and to the amazement of the former he perceived that with the exception of a sort of room fitted up with large and water-tight lockers, which were placed in full view, all the rest of the brigantine was occupied by the accommodations of her officers and crew.

"The world gives us the reputation of freetraders," continued Tiller, smiling maliciously; "but if the admiralty court were here, big wigs and high staffs, judge and jury, it would be at a loss to bring us to conviction. There is iron to keep the lady on her feet, and water, with

some garnish of Jamaica, and the wines of old Spain and the islands, to cheer the hearts and cool the mouths of my fellows, beneath that deck; and more than that there is not. We have stores for the table and the breeze beyond yon bulkhead; and here are lockers beneath you, that are—empty! See, one is open; it is neat as any drawer in a lady's bureau. This is no place for your Dutchman's strong waters, or the coarse skins of your tobacconist. Odd's my life! He who would go on the scent of the *Water-Witch's* lading, must follow your beauty in her satins, or your parson in his band and gown. There would be much lamentation in the church, and many a heavy-hearted bishop, were it known that the good craft had come to harm!"

"There must be an end to this audacious trifling with the law," said Ludlow; "and the time may be nearer than you suppose."

"I look at the pages of the lady's book in the pride of each morning: for we have it aboard here, that when she intends to serve us foul, she will at least be honest enough to give a warning. The mottoes often change, but her words are ever true. 'Tis hard to overtake the driving mist, Captain Ludlow, and he must hold good way with the wind itself who wishes to stay long in our company."

"Many a boastful sailor has been caught. The breeze that is good for the light of draught, and the breeze that is good for the deep keel, are different. You may live to learn what a stout spar, a wide arm, and a steady hull can do."

"The lady of the wild eye and wicked smile protect me! I have seen the witch buried fathoms deep in brine, and the glittering water falling from her tresses like golden stars; but never have I read an untruth in her pages. There is good intelligence between her and some on board; and, trust me, she knows the path of the ocean too well to steer a wrong course. But we prate like gossiping rivermen. Wilt see the Skimmer of the Seas?"

"Such is the object of our visit," returned Ludlow, whose heart beat violently at the name of the redoubtable rover. "If you are not he, bring us where he is."

"Speak lower; if the lady under the bowsprit hear such treason against her favorite, I'll not answer for her good will. If I am not he!" added the hero of the India-shawl, laughing freely. "Well, an ocean is bigger than a sea, and a bay is not a gulf. You shall have an opportunity of judging between us, noble Captain, and then I leave opinions to each man's wisdom. Follow."

He quitted the hatchway, and led his companions toward the accommodations in the stern of the vessel.

CHAPTER XV.

"God save you, sir!
And you, sir; you are welcome.
Travel you, sir, or are you at the farthest?"
—TAMING OF THE SHREW.

IF the exterior of the brigantine was so graceful in form and so singular in arrangement, the interior was still more worthy of observation. There were two small cabins beneath the main deck, one on each side of, and immediately adjoining, the limited space that was destined to receive her light but valuable cargoes. It was into one of these that Tiller had descended like a man who freely entered into his own apartment; but partly above, and nearer to the stern, were a suite of little rooms that were fitted and furnished in a style altogether different. The equipments were those of a yacht rather than those which might be supposed suited to the pleasures of even the most successful dealer in contraband.

The principal deck had been sunk several feet, commencing at the aftermost bulkhead of the cabins of the subordinate officers, in a manner to give the necessary height without interfering with the line of the brigantine's shear. The arrangement was consequently not to be seen by an observer who was not admitted into the vessel itself. A descent of a step or two, however, brought the visitors to a level of the cabin floor, and into an ante-room that was evidently fitted for the convenience of the domestics. A small silv

hand-bell lay on the table, and Tiller rang it lightly, like one whose ordinary manner was restrained by respect. It was answered by the appearance of a boy, whose years could not exceed ten, and whose attire was so whimsical as to merit description.

The material of the dress of this young servitor of Neptune was a light rose-colored silk, cut in a fashion to resemble the habits formerly worn by pages of the great. His body was belted by a band of gold, a collar of fine thread lace floated on his neck and shoulders, and even his feet were clad in a sort of buskins that were ornamented with fringes of real lace and tassels of bullion. The form and features of the child were delicate, and his air as unlike as possible to the coarse and brusk manner of a vulgar ship-boy.

"Waste and prodigality!" muttered the Alderman, when the extraordinary little usher presented himself, in answer to the summons of Tiller. "This is the very wantonness of cheap goods and unfettered commerce! There is enough of Mechlin, Patroon, on the shoulders of that urchin, to deck the stomacher of the Queen. 'Fore George, goods were cheap in the market when the young scoundrel had his livery!"

The surprise was not confined, however, to the observant and frugal burgher. Ludlow and Van Staats of Kinderhook manifested equal amazement, though their wonder was exhibited in a less characteristic manner. The former turned short to demand the meaning of this masquerade, when he perceived that the hero of the India-shawl had disappeared. They were then alone with the fantastic page, and it became necessary to trust to his intelligence for directions how to proceed.

"Who art thou, child?—and who has sent thee hither?" demanded Ludlow. The boy raised a cap of the same rose-colored silk, and pointed to an image of a female, with a swarthy face and a malign smile, painted, with exceeding art, on its front.

"I serve the sea-green lady, with others of the brigantine."

"And who is the lady of the color of shallow water, and whence come you, in particular?"

"This is her likeness: if you would speak with her, she stands on the cut-water, and rarely refuses an answer."

"'Tis odd that a form of wood should have the gift of speech!"

"Dost think her then of wood?" returned the child, looking timidly, and yet curiously, up into the face of Ludlow. "Others have said the same; but those who know best deny it. She does not answer with a tongue, but the book has always something to say."

"Here is a grievous deception practiced on the superstition of this boy! I have read the book and can make little of its meaning."

"Then read again. 'Tis by many reaches that the leeward vessel gains upon the wind. My master bid me ask you in——"

"Hold—thou hast both master and mistress? You have told us of the latter, but we would know something of the former. Who is thy master?"

The boy smiled and looked aside, as if he hesitated to answer.

"Nay, refuse not to reply. I come with the authority of the Queen."

"He tells us that the sea-green lady is our queen, and that we have no other."

"Rashness and rebellion!" muttered Myndert, "but this foolhardiness will one day bring as pretty a brigantine as ever sailed in the narrow seas to condemnation; and then there will be rumors abroad, and characters cracked, until every lover of gossip in the Americas shall be tired of defamation."

"It is a bold subject that dares say this!" rejoined Ludlow, who heeded not the by-play of the Alderman; "your master has a name?"

"We never hear it. When Neptune boards us under the tropics, he always hails the Skimmer of the Seas, and then they answer. The old god knows us well, for we pass his latitude oftener than other ships, they say."

"You are then a cruiser of some service in the brigantine—no doubt you have trod

many distant shores, belonging to so swift a craft."

"I! I never was on land," returned the boy, thoughtfully. "It must be droll to be there; they say one can hardly walk, it is so steady! I put a question to the sea-green lady before we came to the narrow inlet, to know when I was to go ashore."

"And she answered?"

"It was some time first. Two watches were past before a word was to be seen; at last I got the lines. I believed she mocked me, though I have never dared show it to my master, that he might say."

"Hast the words here?—perhaps we might assist thee, as there are some among us who know most of the sea-paths."

The boy looked timidly and suspiciously around; then thrusting a hand hurriedly into a pocket, he drew forth two bits of paper, each of which contained a scrawl, and both of which had evidently been much thumbed and studied.

"Here," he said in a voice that was nearly suppressed to a whisper. "This was on the first page. I was so frightened lest the lady should be angry that I did not look again until the next watch; and then," turning the leaf, "I found this."

Ludlow took the bit of paper first offered, and read, written in a child's hand, the following extract:

"I pray thee
Remember, I have done thee worthy service;
Told thee no lies, made no mistakings, served
Without or grudge or grumblings."

"I thought that 'twas in mockery," continued the boy, when he saw by the eye of the young Captain that he had read the quotation: "for it was very like, though more prettily worded, than that which I had said myself!"

"And what was the second answer?"

"This was found in the first morning watch," the child returned, reading the second extract himself:

"Thou think'st
It much to tread the ooze of the salt deep,
And run upon the sharp wind of the north!"

"I never dared to ask again. But what matters that? They say the ground is rough and difficult to walk on; that earthquakes shake it and make holes to swallow cities; men slay each other on the highways for money, and that the house I see on the hills must always remain in the same spot. It must be very melancholy to live always in the same spot; but then it must be odd never to feel a motion!"

"Except the occasional rocking of an earthquake. Thou art better afloat, child; but thy master, this Skimmer of the Seas——"

"Hist!" whispered the boy, raising a finger for silence. "He has come up into the great cabin. In a moment we shall have his signal to enter."

A few light touches on the strings of a guitar followed, and then a symphony was rapidly and beautifully executed, by one in the adjoining apartment.

"Alida, herself, is not more nimble-fingered," whispered the Alderman; "and I never heard the girl touch the Dutch lute that cost a hundred Holland guilders with a livelier movement!"

Ludlow signed for silence. A fine, manly voice, of great richness and depth, was soon heard, singing to an accompaniment on the same instrument. The air was grave, and altogether unusual for the social character of one who dwelt upon the ocean, being chiefly in recitative. The words, as near as might be distinguished, ran as follows:

"My brigantine!
Just in thy mold, and beauteous in thy form,
Gentle in roll, and buoyant on the surge,
Light as the sea-fowl, rocking in the storm,
In breeze and gale, thy onward course we urge,
My Water-Queen!

"Lady of mine!
More light and swift than thou, none thread the sea,
With surer keel, or steadier on its path:
We brave each waste of ocean-mystery,
And laugh to hear the howling tempest's wrath!
For we are thine!

"My brigantine!
Trust to the mystic power that points thy way,
Trust to the eye that pierces from afar,
Trust the red meteors that around thee play
And fearless trust the sea-green lady's star;
Thou bark divine!"

"He often sings thus," whispered the boy, when the song was ended; "they say the sea-green lady loves music that

tells of the ocean, and of her power. Hark! he has bid me enter."

"He did but touch the strings of the guitar again, boy."

"'Tis his signal, when the weather is fair. When we have the whistlings of the wind and the roar of the water, then he has a louder call."

Ludlow would have gladly listened longer; but the boy opened a door, and, pointing the way to those he conducted, he silently vanished, himself, behind a curtain.

The visitors, more particularly the young commander of the *Coquette*, found new subjects of admiration and wonder on entering the main cabin of the brigantine. The apartment, considering the size of the vessel, was spacious and high. It received light from a couple of windows in the stern, and it was evident that two smaller rooms, one on each of the quarters, shared with it in this advantage. The space between these state-rooms, as they are called in nautical language, necessarily formed a deep alcove, which might be separated from the outer portion of the cabin by a curtain of damask, that now hung in festoons from a beam fashioned into a gilded cornice. A luxurious-looking pile of cushions, covered with red morocco, lay along the transom, in the manner of an eastern divan; and against the bulkhead of the state-room stood an agrippina of mahogany, that was lined with the same material. Neat and tasteful cases for books were suspended here and there; and the guitar which had so lately been used lay on a small table of some precious wood, that occupied the center of the alcove. There were also other implements, like those which occupy the leisure of a cultivated but perhaps an effeminate rather than a vigorous mind, scattered around, some evidently long neglected, and others appearing to have been more recently in favor.

The outer portion of the cabin was furnished in a similar style, though it contained many more of the articles that ordinarily belong to domestic economy. It had its agrippina, its piles of cushions, its chairs of beautiful wood, its cases for books, and its neglected instruments, intermixed with fixtures of more solid and permanent appearance, which were arranged to meet the violent motion that was often unavoidable in so small a bark.

There was a slight hanging of crimson damask around the whole apartment; and, here and there, a small mirror was let into the bulkheads and ceilings. All the other parts were of rich mahogany, relieved by panels of rosewood, that gave an appearance of exquisite finish to the cabin. The floor was covered with a mat of the finest texture, and of a fragrance that announced both its freshness and the fact that the grass had been the growth of a warm and luxurious climate. The place, as was indeed the whole vessel, so far as the keen eye of Ludlow could detect, was entirely destitute of arms, not even a pistol or a sword being suspended in those places where weapons of that description are usually seen in all vessels employed either in war or in a trade that might oblige those who sail them to deal in violence.

In the center of the alcove stood the youthful-looking and extraordinary person who, in so unceremonious a manner, had visited la Cour des Fees the preceding night. His dress was much the same, in fashion and material, as when last seen; still, it had been changed; for, on the breast of the silken frock was painted an image of the sea-green lady, done with exquisite skill, and in a manner to preserve the whole of the wild and unearthly character of the expression. The wearer of this singular ornament leaned lightly against the little table, and as he bowed with entire self-possession to his guests, his face lighted with a smile that seemed to betray melancholy, no less than courtesy. At the same time he raised his cap, and stood in the rich, jet-black locks with which Nature had so exuberantly shaded his forehead.

The manner of the visitors was less easy. The deep anxiety with which both Ludlow and the Patroon had undertaken to board the notorious smuggler had given place to an amazement and a curiosity

that caused them nearly to forget their errand; while Alderman Van Beverout appeared shy and suspicious, manifestly thinking less of his niece than of the consequences of so remarkable an interview. They all returned the salutation of their host, though each one waited for him to speak.

"They tell me I have the pleasure to receive a commander of Queen Anne's service, the wealthy and honorable Patroon of Kinderhook, and a most worthy and respectacle member of the city corporation, known as Alderman Van Beverout," commenced the individual who did the honors of the vessel on this occasion. "It is not often that my poor brigantine is thus favored, and, in the name of my mistress, I would express our thanks."

As he ceased speaking, he bowed again with ceremonious gravity, as if all were equally strangers to him; though the young men saw plainly that a smothered smile played about a mouth that even they could not refuse the praise of being of rare and extraordinary attraction.

"As we have but one mistress," said Ludlow, "it is our common duty to wish to do her pleasure."

"I understand you, sir. It is scarce necessary to say that the wife of George of Denmark has little authority here. Forbear, I pray you," he added, quickly, observing that Ludlow was about to answer. "These interviews with the servants of that lady are not unfrequent; and as I know other matters have sent you hither, we will imagine all said that a vigilant officer and a most loyal subject could utter to an outlaw and a trifler with the regulations of the customs. That controversy must be settled between us under our canvas, and by virtue of our speed, or other professional qualities, at proper time and in a proper place. We will now touch on different matters."

"I think the gentleman is right, Patroon. When matters are ripe for the exchequer there is no use in worrying the lungs with summing up the testimony, like a feed advocate. Twelve discreet men who have bowels of compassion for the vicissitudes of trade, and who know how hard it is to earn and how easy it is to spend, will deal with the subject better than all the idle talkers in the Provinces."

"When confronted to the twelve disinterested Daniels, I shall be fain to submit to their judgment," rejoined the other, still suffering the willful smile to linger round his lips. "You, sir, I think, are called Mr. Myndert Van Beverout. To what fall in peltry, or what rise in markets, do I owe the honor of this visit?"

"It is said that some from this vessel were so bold as to land on my grounds, during the past night, without the knowledge and consent of their owner—you will observe the purport of our conversation, Mr. Van Staats, for it may yet come before the authorities—as I said, sir, without their owner's knowledge, and that there were dealings in articles that are contraband of law unless they enter the provinces purified and embellished by the air of the Queen's European dominions—God bless her Majesty!"

"Amen. That which quitteth the *Water-Witch* commonly comes purified by the air of many different regions. We are no laggards in movement, here; and the winds of Europe scarcely cease to blow upon our sails before we scent the gales of America. But this is rather exchequer matter, to be discussed before the twelve merciful burghers, than entertainment for such a visit."

"I open with the facts, that there may be no errors. But in addition to so foul an imputation on the credit of a merchant there has a great calamity befallen me and my household during the past night. The daughter and heiress of old Etienne de Barberie has left her abode, and we have reason to believe that she has been deluded so far as to come hither. Faith and correspondence! Master Seadrift; but I think this is exceeding the compass of even a trader in contraband! I can make allowance for some errors in an account; but women can be exported and imported without duty, and when and where one pleases, and, therefore, the less necessity for running them out of their old uncle's habitation in so secret a manner."

"An undeniable position, and a feeling

conclusion! I admit the demand to be made in all form, and I suppose these two gentlemen are to be considered as witnesses of its legality."

"We have come to aid a wronged and distressed relative and guardian in searching for his misguided ward," Ludlow answered.

The freetrader turned his eyes on the Patroon, who signified his assent by a silent bow.

"'Tis well, gentlemen; I also admit the testimony. But though in common believed so worthy a subject for justice, I have hitherto had but little direct communication with the blind deity. Do the authorities usually give credit to these charges without some evidence at least of their truth?"

"Is it denied?"

"You are still in possession of your senses, Captain Ludlow, and may freely use them. But this is an artifice to divert pursuit. There are other vessels besides the brigantine, and a capricious fair may have sought a protector even under a pennant of Queen Anne!"

"This is a truth that has been but too obvious to my mind, Mr. Van Beverout," observed the sententious Patroon. "It would have been well to ascertain whether she we seek has not taken some less exceptionable a course than this, before we hastily believe that your niece would so easily become the wife of a stranger."

"Has Mr. Van Staats any hidden meaning in his words, that he speaks ambiguously?" demanded Ludlow.

"A man, conscious of his good intentions, has little occasion to speak equivocally. I believe, with this reputed smuggler, that la belle Barberie would be more likely to fly with one she has long known, and whom I fear she has but too well esteemed, than with an utter stranger, over whose life there is cast a shade of so dark mystery."

"If the impression that the lady could yield her esteem with too little discretion be any excuse for suspicions, then may I advise a search in the manor of Kinderhook!"

"Consent and joy! The girl need not have stolen to church to become the bride of Oloff Van Staats!" interrupted the Alderman. "She would have had my benediction on the match, and a fat gift to give it unction."

"These suspicions are but natural between men bent on the same object," resumed the freetrader. "The officer of the Queen thinks a glance of the eye, from a willful fair, means admiration of broad lands and rich meadows; and the lord of the manor distrusts the romance of warlike service, and the power of an imagination which roams the sea. Still may I ask, what is there here to tempt a proud and courted beauty to forget station, sex and friends?"

"Caprice and vanity! There is no answering for a woman's mind! Here we bring articles, at great risk and heavy charges, from the farther Indies to please their fancies, and they change their modes easier than the beaver casts its coat. Their conceits sadly unsettle trade, and I know not why they may not cause a willful girl to do any other act of folly."

"This reasoning seems conclusive with the uncle. Do the suitors assent to its justice?"

The Patroon of Kinderhook had stood gazing, long and earnestly, at the countenance of the extraordinary being who asked this question. A movement, which bespoke equally his conviction and his regret escaped him, but he continued silent. Not so Ludlow. Of a more ardent temperament, though equally sensible of the temptation which had caused Alida to err, and as keenly alive to all the consequences to herself, as well as to others, there was something of professional rivalry and of an official right to investigate, which still mingled with his feelings. He had found time to examine more closely the articles that the cabin contained, and when their singular host put his question he pointed, with an ironical but mournful smile, to a footstool richly wrought in flowers of tints and shades so just as to seem natural.

"This is no work of a sail-maker's needle!" said the Captain of the *Coquette*. "Other beauties have been induced to pass

an idle hour in your gay residence, hardy mariner; but, sooner or later, judgment will overtake the light-heeled craft."

"On the wind, or off, she must some day lag, as we seamen have it! Captain Ludlow, I excuse some harshness of construction that your language might imply; for it becomes a commissioned servant of the crown to use freedom with one who, like the lawless companion of the princely Hal, is but too apt to propose to 'rob me the king's exchequer.' But, sir, this brigantine and her character are but little known to you. We have no need of truant damsels to let us into the mystery of the sex's taste; for a female spirit guides all our humors, and imparts something of her delicacy to all our acts, even though it be the fashion among burghers to call them lawless. See," throwing a curtain carelessly aside, and exhibiting behind it various articles of womanly employment, "here are the offspring of both pencil and needle. The sorceress," touching the image on his breast, "will not be entertained without some deference to her sex."

"This affair must be arranged, I see, by a compromise," observed the Alderman. "By your leave, gentlemen, I will make proposals in private to this bold trader, who, perhaps, will listen to the offers I have to propose."

"Ah! This savors more of the spirit of trade than of that of the sea-goddess I serve," cried the other, causing his fingers to run lightly over the strings of the guitar. "Compromise and offers are sounds that become a burgher's lips. My tricksy spirit, commit these gentlemen to the care of bold Thomas Tiller, while I confer with the merchant. The character of Mr. Van Beverout, Captain Ludlow, will protect us both from the suspicions of any designs on the revenue!"

Laughing at his own allusion, the free-trader signed to the boy, who had appeared from behind a curtain, to show the disappointed suitors of la belle Barberie into another part of the vessel.

"Foul tongues and calumnies! Master Seadrift, this unlawful manner of playing round business, after accounts are settled and receipts passed, may lead to other loss besides that of character. The commander of the *Coquette* is not more than half satisfied of my ignorance of your misdoings in behalf of the customs, already; and these jokes are like so many punches into a smoldering fire on a dark night. They only give light, and cause people to see the clearer—though, Heaven knows, no man has less reason to dread an inquiry into his affairs than myself! I challenge the best accountant in the colonies to detect a false footing, or a doubtful entry in any book I have, from the memorandum to the ledger."

"The Proverbs are not more sententious, nor the Psalms half as poetical, as your library. But why this secret parley? The brigantine has a swept hold."

"Swept! Brooms and Van Tromp! Thou hast swept the pavilion of my niece—of its mistress, no less than my purse of its Johannes. This is carrying a little innocent barter into a most forbidden commerce, and I hope the joke is to end before the affair gets to be sweetening to the tea of the Province gossips! Such a tale would affect the autumn importation of sugars!"

"This is more vivid than clear. You have my laces and velvets; my brocades and satins are already in the hands of the Manhattan dames; and your furs and Johannes are safe where no boarding officer from the *Coquette*——"

"Well, there is no need of speaking-trumpets, to tell a man what he knows already, to his cost! I should expect no less than bankruptcy from two or three such bargains, and you wish to add loss of character to loss of gold. Bulkheads have ears in a ship, as well as walls in houses. I wish no more said of the trifling traffic that has been between us. If I lose a thousand florins by the operation I shall know how to be resigned. Patience and afflictions! Have I not buried as full-fed and promising a gelding this morning as ever paced a pavement, and has any man heard a complaint from my lips? I know how to meet losses, I hope; and so no more of an unlucky purchase."

"Truly, if it be not for trade, there is

little in common between the mariners of the brigantine and Alderman Van Beverout."

"The greater the necessity thou shouldst end this silly joke and restore his niece. I am not sure the affair can be at all settled with either of these hot-headed young men though I should even offer to throw in a few thousands more, by way of make-weight. When a female reputation gets a bad name in the market, 'tis harder to dispose of than falling stock; and your young lords of manors and commanders of cruisers have stomachs like usurers; no percentage will satisfy them; it must be all for nothing. There was no such foolery in the days of thy worthy father! The honest trafficker brought his cutter into port with as innocent a look as a mill-boat. We had our discourses on the qualities of his wares, when here was his price, and there was my gold. Odd or even! It was all a chance which had the best of the bargain. I was a thriving man in those days, Master Seadrift; but thy spirit seems the spirit of extortion itself!"

There was momentarily contempt on the lip of the handsome smuggler, but it disappeared in an expression of evident and painful sadness.

"Thou hast softened my heart ere now, most liberal burgher," he answered, "by these allusions to my parent; and many is the doubloon that I have paid for his eulogies."

"I speak as disinterestedly as a parson preaches! What is a trifle of gold between friends? Yes, there was happiness in trade during the time of thy predecessor. He had a comely and a deceptive craft, that might be likened to an untrimmed racer. There was motion in it, at need, and yet it had the air of a leisurely Amsterdammer. I have known an exchequer cruiser hail him, and ask the news of the famous freetrader, with as little suspicion as he would have in speaking the Lord High-Admiral. There were no fooleries in his time; no unseemly hussies stuck under his bowsprit, to put an honest man out of countenance; no high-flyers in sail and paint; no singing and luting—but all was rational and gainful barter. Then he was a man to ballast his boat with something valuable. I have known him to throw in fifty ankers of gin, without a farthing for freight, when a bargain has been struck for the finer articles—aye, and finish by landing them in England, for a small premium, when the gift was made!"

"He deserves thy praise, grateful Alderman; but to what conclusion does this opening tend?"

"Well, if more gold must pass between us," continued the reluctant Myndert, "we shall not waste time in counting it; though, Heaven knows, Master Seadrift, thou hast already drained me dry. Losses have fallen heavy on me of late. There is a gelding dead, that fifty Holland ducats will not replace on the boom-key of Rotterdam, to say nothing of freight and charges, which come particularly heavy——"

"Speak to thy offer!" interrupted the other, who evidently wished to shorten the interview.

"Restore the girl, and take five-and-twenty thin pieces."

"Half-price for a Flemish gelding! La Belle would blush with honest pride did she know her value in the market."

"Extortion and bowels of compassion! Let it be a hundred, and no farther words between us."

"Hearkee, Mr. Van Beverout: that I sometimes trespass on the Queen's earnings is not to be denied, and least of all to you; for I like neither this manner of ruling a nation by deputy, nor the principle which says one bit of earth is to make laws for another. 'Tis not my humor, sir, to wear an English cotton when my taste is for the Florentine; nor to swallow beer, when I more relish the delicate wines of Gascony. Beyond this, thou knowest I do not trifle, even with fancied rights; and had I fifty of thy nieces, sacks of ducats should not purchase one!"

The Alderman started in a manner that might have induced a spectator to believe he was listening to an incomprehensible proposition. Still his companion spoke with a warmth that gave him no small

reason to believe he uttered no more than he felt, and, inexplicable as it might prove, that he valued treasure less than feeling.

"Obstinacy and extravagance!" muttered Myndert; "what use can a troublesome girl be to one of thy habits? If thou hast deluded——"

"I have deluded none. The brigantine is not an Algerine to ask and take ransom."

"Then let it submit to what I believe it is yet a stranger. If thou hast not enticed my niece away by, Heaven knows, a most vain delusion, let the vessel be searched. This will make the minds of the young men tranquil, and keep the treaty open between us, and the value of the article fixed in the market."

"Freely; but mark! If certain bales containing worthless furs of martens and beavers with other articles of thy colony trade should discover the character of my correspondents, I stand exonerated of all breach of faith."

"There is prudence in that. Yes, there must be no impertinent eyes peeping into bales and packages. Well, I see, Master Seadrift, the impossibility of immediately coming to an understanding; and therefore, I will quit thy vessel, for truly a merchant of reputation should have no unnecessary connection with one so suspected.

The freetrader smiled, partly in scorn, and yet much in sadness, and passed his fingers over the string of the guitar.

"Show this worthy burgher to his friend, Zephyr," he said; and, bowing to the Alderman, he dismissed him in a manner that betrayed a singular compound of feeling. One quick to discover the traces of human passion might have fancied that regret and even sorrow were blended with the natural or assumed recklessness of the smuggler's air and language.

CHAPTER XVI.

"This will prove a brave kingdom to me;
Where I shall have my music for nothing."
—TEMPEST.

DURING the time passed in the secret conference of the cabin, Ludlow and the Patroon were held in discourse on the quarter-deck by the hero of the India-shawl. The dialogue was professional, as Van Staats maintained his ancient reputation for taciturnity. The appearance of Myndert, thoughtful, disappointed, and most evidently perplexed, caused the ideas of all to take a new direction. It is probable that the burgher believed he had not yet bid enough to tempt the freetrader to restore his niece; for by his air it was apparent his mind was far from being satisfied that she was not in the vessel. Still, when questioned by his companions concerning the result of his interview with the freetrader, for reasons best understood by himself, he was fain to answer evasively.

"Of one thing rest satisfied," he said; "the misconception in this affair will yet be explained, and Alida Barberie return unfettered, and with a character as free from blemish as the credit of the Van Stoppers of Holland. The fanciful-looking person in the cabin denies that my niece is here, and I am inclined to think that the balance of truth is on his side. I confess, if one could just look into the cabin, without the trouble of rummaging lockers and cargo, the statement would give more satisfaction; but—hem—gentlemen, we must take the assertion on credit, for want of more sufficient security."

Ludlow looked at the cloud above the mouth of the Raritan, and his lip curled in a smile. "Let the wind hold here, at east," he said, "and we shall act our pleasure with both lockers and cabins."

"Hist! the worthy Master Tiller may overhear this threat; after all, I do not know whether prudence does not tell us to let the brigantine depart."

"Mr. Alderman Van Beverout," rejoined the Captain, whose cheek had reddened to a glow, "my duty must not be gauged by your affection for your niece. Though content that Alida Barberie should quit the country, like an article of vulgar commerce, the commander of this vessel must get a passport of Her Majesty's cruiser ere she again enter the high sea."

"Wilt say as much to the sea-green lady?" asked the mariner of the shawl, suddenly appearing at his elbow.

The question was so unexpected and so strange that it caused an involuntary start; but, recovering his recollection on the instant, the young sailor haughtily replied—

"Or to any other monster thou canst conjure."

"We will take you at the word. There is no more certain method of knowing the past or the future, the quarter of the heavens from which the winds are to come, or the season of the hurricanes than by putting a question to our mistress. She who knows so much of hidden matters may tell us what you wish to know. We will have her called by the usual summons."

Thus saying, the mariner of the shawl gravely quitted his guests, and descended into the inferior cabins of the vessel. It was but a moment before there arose sounds from some secret though not distant quarter of the brigantine, that caused, in some measure, both surprise and pleasure to Ludlow and the Patroon. Their companion had his motives for being insensible to either of these emotions.

After a short and rapid symphony, a wind-instrument took up a wild strain, while a human voice was again heard, chanting to the music words which were so much involved by the composition of the air as to render it impossible to trace more than that their burden was a sort of mysterious incantation of some ocean deity.

"Squeaking and flutes!" grumbled Myndert, ere the last sounds were fairly ended. "This is downright heathenish; and a plain-dealing man, who does business aboveboard, has good reason to wish himself honestly at church. What have we to do with land-witches, or water-witches, or any other witchcraft, that we stay in the brigantine, now it is known that my niece is not to be found aboard her; and, moreover, even admitting that we were disposed to traffic, the craft has nothing in her that a man in Manhattan should want. The deepest bog of thy manor, Patroon, is safer ground to tread on than the deck of a vessel that has got a reputation like that of this craft."

The scenes of which he was a witness had produced their effect on Van Staats of Kinderhook. Of a slow imagination but of a powerful and vast frame, he was not easily excited, either to indulge in fanciful images, or to suffer personal apprehension. Only a few years had passed since men, who in other respects were enlightened, firmly believed in the existence of supernatural agencies in the control of the affairs of this life; and though the New Netherlanders had escaped the infatuation which prevailed so generally in the religious provinces of New England, a credulous superstition, of a less active quality, possessed the minds of the most intelligent of the Dutch colonists, and even of their descendants so lately as in our own times. The art of divination was particularly in favor; and it rarely happened, that any inexplicable event affected the fortunes or comforts of the good provincialists without their having recourse to some one of the more renowned fortune-tellers of the country, for an explanation. Men of slow faculties love strong excitement, because they are insensible to less powerful impulses, as men of hard heads find most enjoyment in strong liquors. The Patroon was altogether of the sluggish cast; and to him there was consequently a secret but deep pleasure in his present situation.

"What important results may flow from this adventure, we know not, Mr. Alderman Van Beverout," returned Oloff Van Staats; "and I confess a desire to see and hear more before we land. This Skimmer of the Seas is altogether a different man from what our rumors in the city have reported; and, by remaining, we may set public opinion nearer to the truth. I have heard my late venerable aunt——"

"Chimney-corners and traditions! The good lady was no bad customer of these gentry, Patroon; and it is lucky that they got no more of thy inheritance, in the way of fees. You see the Lust in Rust against the mountain there; well,

all that is meant for the public is on the outside, and all that is intended for my own private gratification is kept within doors. But here is Captain Ludlow, who has matters of the Queen on his hands, and the gentleman will find it disloyal to waste the moments in this juggling."

"I confess the same desire to witness the end," dryly returned the commander of the *Coquette*. "The state of the wind prevents any immediate change in the positions of the two vessels; and why not get a farther insight into the extraordinary character of those who belong to the brigantine?"

"Aye, there it is!" muttered the Alderman between his teeth. "Your insights and outsights lead to all the troubles of life. One is never snug with these fantastics, which trifle with a secret, like a fly fluttering round a candle, until his wings get burned."

As his companions seemed resolved to stay, however, there remained no alternative for the burgher but patience. Although apprehension of some indiscreet exposure was certainly the feeling uppermost in his mind, he was not entirely without some of the weakness which caused Oloff Van Staats to listen and to gaze with so much obvious interest and secret awe. Even Ludlow, himself, felt more affected than he would have willingly owned, by the extraordinary situation in which he was placed. No man is entirely insensible to the influence of sympathy, let it exert its powers in what manner it will. Of this the young sailor was the more conscious through the effect that was produced on himself by the grave exterior and attentive manner of all the mariners of the brigantine. He was a seaman of no mean accomplishments; and, among other attainments that properly distinguish men of his profession, he had learned to know the country of a sailor by those general and distinctive marks which form the principal difference between men whose common pursuit has in so great a degree created a common character.

Intelligence, at that day, was confined to narrow limits among those who dwelt on the ocean. Even the officer was but too apt to be one of rude and boisterous manners, of limited acquirements, and of deep and obstinate prejudices. No wonder, then, that the common man was, in general, ignorant of most of those opinions which gradually enlighten society. Ludlow had seen, on entering the vessel, that her crew was composed of men of different countries. Age and personal character seemed to have been more consulted, in their selection, than national distinctions. There was a Finlander, with a credulous and oval physiognomy, sturdy but short frame, and a light, vacant eye; and a dark-skinned seaman of the Mediterranean, whose classical outline of feature was often disturbed by uneasy and sensitive glances at the horizon. These two men had come and placed themselves near the group on the quarter-deck, when the last music was heard; and Ludlow had ascribed the circumstance to a sensibility to melody, when the child Zephyr stole to their side, in a manner to show that more was meant by the movement than was apparent in the action itself. The appearance of Tiller, who invited the party to re-enter the cabin explained its meaning, by showing that these men, like themselves, had business with the being, who, it was pretended, had so great an agency in controlling the fortunes of the brigantine.

The party, who now passed into the little anteroom, was governed by very different sensations. The curiosity of Ludlow was lively, fearless, and a little mingled with an interest that might be termed professional; while that of his two companions was not without some inward reverence for the mysterious power of the sorceress. The two seamen manifested dull dependence, while the boy exhibited, in his ingenuous and half terrified countenance, most unequivocally the influence of childish awe. The mariner of the shawl was grave, silent, and, what was unusual, in his deportment respectful. After a moment's delay, the door of the inner apartment was opened by Seadrift himself, and he signed for the whole to enter.

A material change had been made in the arrangement of the principal cabin. The

light was entirely excluded from the stern, and the crimson curtain had been lowered before the alcove. A small window, whose effect was to throw a dim obscurity within, had been opened in the side. The objects on which its light fell strongest received a soft coloring from the hues of the hangings.

The freetrader received his guests with a chastened air, bowing silently, and with less of levity in his mien than in the former interview. Still Ludlow thought there lingered a forced but sad smile about his handsome mouth; and the Patroon gazed at his fine features with the admiration that one might feel for the most favored of those who were believed to minister at some supernatural shrine. The feelings of the Alderman were exhibited only by some half-suppressed murmurs of discontent, that from time to time escaped him, notwithstanding a certain degree of reverence, that was gradually prevailing over his ill-concealed dissatisfaction.

"They tell me you would speak with our mistress," said the principal personage of the vessel, in a subdued voice. "There are others, too, it would seem, who wish to seek counsel from her wisdom. It is now many months since we have had direct converse with her, though the book is ever open to all applicants for knowledge. You have nerves for the meeting?"

"Her Majesty's enemies have never reproached me with their want," returned Ludlow, smiling incredulously. "Proceed with your incantations that we may know."

"We are not necromancers, sir, but faithful mariners, who do their mistress's pleasure. I know that you are sceptical; but bolder men have confessed their mistakes with less testimony. Hist! we are not alone. I hear the opening and shutting of the brigantine's transoms."

The speaker then fell back nearly to the line in which the others had ranged themselves, and awaited the result in silence. The curtain rose to a low air on the same wind instrument; and even Ludlow felt an emotion more powerful than interest, as he gazed on the object that was revealed to view.

A female form attired, as near as might be, like the figure-head of the vessel, and standing in a similar attitude, occupied the center of the alcove. As in the image, one hand held a book with its page turned toward the spectators, while a finger of the other pointed ahead, as if giving to the brigantine its course. The sea-green drapery was floating behind as if it felt the influence of the air; and the face had the same dark and unearthly hue, with its malign and remarkable smile.

When the start and the first gaze of astonishment were over the Alderman and his companion glanced their eyes at each other in wonder. The smile in the look of the freetrader became less hidden, and it partook of triumph.

"If any here has aught to say to the lady of our bark, let him now declare it. She has come far, at our call, and will not tarry long."

"I would then know," said Ludlow, drawing a heavy breath, like one recovering from some sudden and powerful sensation, "if she I seek be within the brigantine?"

He who acted the part of mediator in this extraordinary ceremony, bowed and advanced to the book, which, with an air of deep reverence, he consulted, reading, or appearing to read, from its pages.

"You are asked here, in return for that you inquire, if she you seek is sought in sincerity?"

Ludlow reddened; the manliness of the profession to which he belonged, however, overcame the reluctance natural to self-esteem; and he answered, firmly—

"She is."

"But you are a mariner; men of the sea place their affections, often, on the fabric in which they dwell. Is the attachment for her whom you seek stronger than love of wandering, of your ship, your youthful expectations, and the glory that forms a young soldier's dreams?"

The commander of the *Coquette* hesitated. After a moment of pause, like that of self-examination, he said—

"As much so as may become a man."

A cloud crossed the brow of his inter-

rogator, who advanced and again consulted the pages of the book.

"You are required to say, if a recent event has not disturbed your confidence in her you seek?"

"Disturbed—but not destroyed."

The sea-green lady moved, and the pages of the mysterious volume trembled, as if eager to deliver their oracles.

"And could you repress curiosity, pride, and all the other sentiments of your sex, and seek her favor, without asking explanation, as before the occurrence of late events?"

"I would do much to gain a kind look from Alida de Barberie; but the degraded spirit, of which you speak, would render me unworthy of her esteem. If I found her as I lost her, my life should be devoted to her happiness; if not, to mourning that one so fair should have fallen!"

"Have you ever felt jealousy?"

"First let me know if I have cause!" cried the young man, advancing a step toward the motionless form, with an evident intent to look closer into its character.

The hand of the mariner of the shawl arrested him with the strength of a giant.

"None trespass on the respect due our mistress," coolly observed the vigorous seaman, while he motioned to the other to retreat.

A fierce glance shot from his eye; and then the recollection of his present helplessness came, in season, to restrain the resentment of the offended officer.

"Have you ever felt jealousy?" continued his undisturbed interrogator.

"Would any love that had not?"

A gentle respiration was heard in the cabin, during the short pause that succeeded, though none could tell whence it came. The Alderman turned to regard the Patroon, as if he believed the sigh was his; while the startled Ludlow looked curiously around him, at a loss to know who acknowledged, with so much sensibility, the truth of his reply.

"Your answers are well," resumed the freetrader, after a pause longer than usual. Then, turning to Oloff Van Staats, he said, "Whom, or what, do you seek?"

"We come on a common errand."

"And do you seek in all sincerity?"

"I could wish to find."

"You are rich in lands and houses; is she you seek dear to you as this wealth?"

"I esteem them both, since one could not wish to tie a woman he admired to beggary."

The Alderman hemmed so loud as to fill the cabin, and then, startled at his own interruption, he involuntarily bowed an apology to the motionless form in the alcove, and regained his composure.

"There is more of prudence than of ardor in your answer. Have you ever felt jealousy?"

"That has he!" eagerly exclaimed Myndert. "I've known the gentleman raving as a bear that has lost its cub, when my niece has smiled, in church, for instance, though it were only in answer to a nod from an old lady. Philosophy and composure, Patroon! Who the devil knows but Alida may hear of this questioning? and then her French blood will boil, to find that your love has always gone as regularly as a town clock."

"Could you receive her without inquiring into past events?"

"That would he—that would he!" returned the Alderman. "I answer for it, that Mr. Van Staats complies with all engagements as punctually as the best house in Amsterdam itself."

The book again trembled, but it was with a waving and dissatisfied motion.

"What is thy will with our mistress?" demanded the freetrader, of the fair-haired sailor.

"I have bargained with some of the dealers of my country for a wind to carry the brigantine through the inlet."

"Go. The *Water-Witch* will sail when there is need; and you?"

"I wish to know whether a few skins I bought last night, for a private venture, will turn to good account?"

"Trust the sea-green lady for your profits. When did she ever let any fail in a bargain! Child, what has brought thee hither?"

The boy trembled, and a little time

elapsed before he found resolution to answer.

"They tell me it is so queer to be upon the land!"

"Sirrah! thou hast been answered. When others go, thou shalt go with them."

"They say 'tis pleasant to taste the fruits from off the very trees——"

"Thou art answered. Gentlemen, our mistress departs. She knows that one among you has threatened her favorite brigantine with the anger of an earthly queen; but it is beneath her office to reply to threats so idle. Hark! her attendants are in waiting."

The wind instrument was once more heard, and the curtain slowly fell to its strains. A sudden and violent noise, resembling the opening and shutting of some massive door, succeeded—then all was still. When the sorceress had disappeared, the freetrader resumed his former ease of manner, seeming to speak and act more naturally. Alderman Van Beverout drew a long breath, like one relieved; and even the mariner of the gay shawl stood in an easier and more reckless attitude than while in her presence. The two seamen and the child withdrew.

"Few who wear that livery have ever before seen the lady of our brigantine," continued the freetrader, addressing himself to Ludlow; "and it is proof that she has less aversion to your cruiser than she in common feels to most of the long pennants that are abroad on the water."

"Thy mistress, thy vessel, and thyself, are alike amusing!" returned the young seaman, again smiling incredulously, and with some little official pride. "It will be well if you maintain this pleasantry much longer, at the expense of her Majesty's customs."

"We trust to the power of the Water-Witch. She has adopted our brigantine as her abode, given it her name, and guides it with her hand. 'Twould be weak to doubt, when thus protected."

"There may be occasion to try her virtues. Were she a spirit of the deep waters, her robe would be blue. Nothing of a light draught can escape the *Coquette!*"

"Dost not know that the color of sea differs in different climes? We not, but you would have answers to questions. Honest Tiller will carry all to the land, and, in passing, the b may again be consulted. I doubt not will leave us some farther memorial of visit."

The freetrader then bowed, and retir behind the curtain, with the air of a sc ereign dismissing his visitors from an a dience; though his eye glanced curious behind him, as he disappeared, as if trace the effect which had been produce by the interview. Alderman Van Bev rout and his friends were in the boat again before a syllable was exchanged betwee them. They had followed the mariner o the shawl, in obedience to his signal; and they quitted the side of the beautiful brigantine, like men who pondered on what they had just witnessed.

Enough has been betrayed, in the course of the narrative, perhaps, to show that Ludlow distrusted, though he could not avoid wondering at what he had seen. He was not entirely free from the superstition that was then so common among seamen; but his education and native good sense enabled him in a great measure to extricate his imagination from that love of the marvelous which is more or less common to all. He had fifty conjectures concerning the meaning of what had passed, and not one of them was true; though each, at the instant, seemed to appease his curiosity, while it quickened his resolution to pry farther into the affair. As for the Patroon of Kinderhook, the present day was one of rare and unequaled pleasure. He had all the gratification which strong excitement can produce in slow natures; and he neither wished a solution of his doubts, nor contemplated any investigation that might destroy so agreeable an illusion. His fancy was full of the dark countenance of the sorceress; and when it did not dwell on a subject so unnatural, it saw the handsome features, ambiguous smile, and attractive air, of her scarcely less admirable minister.

As the boat got to a little distance from

"What means this," said Ludlow, hastily:

"'She, Claudio, that you wronged, look you restore;
Love her, Angelo;
I have confessed her, and I know her virtue.'"

—*The Water Witch.*

the vessel, Tiller stood erect, and ran his eye complacently over the perfection of her hull and rigging.

"Our mistress has equipped and sent upon the wide and unbeaten sea many a bark," he said; "but never a lovelier than our own! Captain Ludlow, there has been some double-dealing between us; but that which is to follow shall depend on our skill, our seamanship, and our heels. You serve Queen Anne, and I the sea-green lady. Let each be true to his mistress, and Heaven preserve the deserving! Wilt see the book before we make the trial?"

Ludlow intimated his assent, and the boat approached the figure-head. It was impossible to prevent the feeling which each of our three adventurers, not excepting the Alderman, felt when they came in full view of the motionless image. The mysterious countenance appeared endowed with thought, and the malign smile seemed more ironical than before.

"The first question was yours, and yours must be the first answered," said Tiller, motioning for Ludlow to consult the page which was open. "Our mistress deals chiefly in verses from the old writer whose thoughts are almost as common to us all as to human nature."

"What means this?" said Ludlow, hastily:

"'She, Claudio, that you wronged, look you restore;
Love her, Angelo;
I have confessed her, and I know her virtue.'"

"These are plain words; but I would rather that another priest should shrive her whom I love!"

"Hist! Young blood is swift and quickly heated. Our lady of the bark will not relish hot speech over her oracles. Come, Master Patroon, turn the page with the rattan, and see what fortune will give."

Oloff Van Staats raised his powerful arm, with the hesitation, and yet with the curiosity of a girl. It was easy to read in his eye the pleasure his heavy nature felt in the excitement; yet it was easy to detect the misgivings of an erroneous education, by the seriousness of all the other members of his countenance. He read aloud:

"I have a motion much imports your good;
Whereto, if you'll a willing ear incline,
What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.
So bring us to our palace, where we'll show
What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know." —*Measure for Measure.*

"Fair dealing, and fairer speech! 'What's yours is mine, and what is mine is yours,' is Measure for Measure, truly, Patroon," cried the Alderman. "A more equitable bargain cannot be made, when the assets are of equal value. Here is encouragement in good sooth; and now, Master Mariner, we will land and proceed to the Lust in Rust, which must be the place meant in the verses. 'What's yet behind,' must be Alida, the tormenting baggage! who has been playing hide-and-seek with us, for no other reason than to satisfy her womanish vanity, by showing how uncomfortable she could make three grave and responsible men. Let the boat go, Master Tiller, since that is thy name; and many thanks for thy civilities."

"'Twould give grave offense to leave the lady, without knowing all she has to say. The answer now concerns you, worthy Alderman, and the rattan will do its turn, in your hand, as well as in that of another."

"I despise a pitiful curiosity, and content myself with knowing what chance and good luck teach," returned Myndert. "There are men in Manhattan ever prying into their neighbors' credit, like frogs lying with their noses out of water; but it is enough for me to know the state of my books, with some insight into that of the market."

"It will not do. This may appease a quiet conscience, like your own, sir; but we of the brigantine may not trifle with our mistress. One touch of the rattan will tell you whether these visits to the *Water-Witch* are likely to prove to your advantage."

Myndert wavered. It has been said that, like most others of his origin in the colony, he had a secret leaning to the art of divination; and the words of the hero of the shawl contained flattering allusion to the profits of his secret commerce. He took the offered stick, and, by the time the page was turned, his eyes were ready

enough to consult its contents. There was but a line, which was also quoted as coming from the well-known comedy of "Measure for Measure."

"Proclaim it, provost, round about the city."

In his eagerness, Myndert read the oracle aloud; then he sank into his seat, affecting to laugh at the whole as a childish and vain conceit.

"Proclamation me no proclamations! Is it a time of hostilities, or of public danger, that one should go shouting with his tidings through the streets? Measure for Measure, truly! Harkee, Master Tiller, this sea-green trull of thine is no better than she should be; and, unless she mend her manner of dealing, no honest man will be found willing to be seen in her company. I am no believer in necromancy—though the inlet has certainly opened this year altogether in an unusual manner—and therefore I put little faith in her words; but as for saying aught of me and mine, in town or country, Holland or America, that can shake my credit, why, I defy her! Still, I would not willingly have any idle stories to contradict; and I shall conclude by saying you will do well to stop her mouth."

"Stop a hurricane, or a tornado! Truth will come in her book, and he that reads must expect to see it. Captain Ludlow, you are master of your movements again; for the inlet is no longer between you and your cruiser. Behind yon hillock is the boat and crew you missed. The latter expect you. And now, gentlemen, we leave the rest to the green lady's guidance, our own good skill, and the winds! I salute you."

The moment his companions were on the shore, the hero of the shawl caused his boat to quit it; and, in less than five minutes, it was swinging by its tackles at the stern of the brigantine.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Like Arion on the dolphin's back,
I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves,
So long as I could see."—TEMPEST.

THERE was one curious but half-confounded observer of all that passed in and around the Cove on the morning in question. This personage was no other than the slave called Bonnie, who was the factotum of his master, over the demesnes of the Lust in Rust, during the time when the presence of the Alderman was required in the city; which was, in truth, at least four-fifths of the year. Responsibility and confidence had produced their effect on this negro, as on more cultivated minds. He had been used to act in situations of care; and practice had produced a habit of vigilance and observation that was not common in men of his unfortunate condition. There is no moral truth more certain than that men, when once accustomed to this species of domination, as readily submit their minds as their bodies to the control of others. Thus it is that we see entire nations maintaining so many erroneous maxims, merely because it has suited the interests of those who do the thinking to give forth these fallacies to their followers. Fortunately, however, for the improvement of the race and the advancement of truth, it is only necessary to give a man an opportunity to exercise his natural faculties in order to make him a reflecting and, in some degree, an independent being. Such, though to a very limited extent, certainly, had been the consequence in the instance of the slave just mentioned.

How far Bonnie had been concerned in the proceedings between his master and the mariners of the brigantine it is unnecessary to say. Little passed at the villa of which he was ignorant; and as curiosity, once awakened, increases its own desire for indulgence, could he have had his wish, little would have passed anywhere near him, without his knowing something of its nature and import. He had seen, while seemingly employed with his hoe in the garden of the Alderman, the trio conveyed by Erasmus across the inlet; had watched the manner in which they followed its margin to the shade of the oak, and had seen them enter the brigantine, as related. That this extraordinary visit on board a vessel which was in common shrouded by so much mystery had given rise to much and unusual reflection in the mind of the black,

was apparent by the manner in which he so often paused in his labor, and stood leaning on the handle of his hoe. He had never known his master so far overstep his usual caution as to quit the dwelling, during the occasional visits of the free-trader; yet he had now gone as it were into the very jaws of the lion, accompanied by the commander of a royal cruiser. No wonder, then, that the vigilance of the negro became still more active, and that not even the slightest circumstance was suffered to escape his admiring eye. During the whole time consumed by the visit related in the preceding chapter, not a minute had been suffered to pass without an inquiring look in the direction either of the brigantine or the adjacent shore.

It is scarcely necessary to say how keen the attention of the slave became, when his master and his companions were seen to return to the land. They immediately ascended to the foot of the oak, where there was a long and apparently a serious conference between them. During this consultation, the negro suffered his gaze, for an instant, to alter its direction. Indeed he scarcely drew breath, until the whole party quitted the spot together and buried themselves in the thicket that covered the cape, taking the direction of its outer or northern extremity, instead of retiring by the shore of the Cove, toward the inlet. Then Bonnie respired heavily, and began to look about him at the other objects that properly belonged to the interest of the scene.

The brigantine had run up her boat, and she now lay, as when first seen, a motionless, beautiful and exquisitely graceful fabric, without the smallest sign about her of an intention to move, or indeed without exhibiting any other proof, except in her admirable order and symmetry, that any of human powers dwelt within her hull. The royal crusier, though larger and of far less aerial mold and fashion, presented the same picture of repose. The distance between the two was about a league; and Bonnie was sufficiently familiar with the formation of the land and the position of the vessels to be quite aware that this inactivity on the part of those whose duty it was to protect the rights of the Queen proceeded from their utter ignorance of the proximity of their neighbor. The thicket which bounded the Cove, and the growth of oaks and pines that stretched along the narrow, sandy spit of land quite to its extremity, sufficiently accounted for the fact. The negro, therefore, after gazing for several minutes at the two immovable vessels, turned his eye askance on the earth, shook his head, and burst into a laugh, which was so noisy that it caused his sable partner to thrust her vacant and circular countenance through an open window of the scullery of the villa, to demand the reason of a merriment that to her faithful feelings appeared to be a little unsocial.

"Hey! you alway' keep 'e queer t'ing to heself, Bonnie!" cried the vixen, "I'm werry glad to see old bones like a hoe; an' I wonner dere ar' time to laugh, wid'e garden full of weed!"

"Grach!" exclaimed the negro, stretching out an arm in a forensic attitude; "what a black woman know of politic! If a hab time to talk, better cook a dinner. Tell one t'ing, Phyllis, and that be dis: vy'e ship of Captain Ludlow no lif'e anchor, an' come take dis rogue in 'e Cove? can a tell dat much, or no?—if not, let a man who understan' heself laugh much as he like. A little fun no harm Queen Anne nor kill 'e gubbenor!"

"All work and no sleep make old bones ache, Bonnie, but!" returned the consort, "ten o'clock—twelve o'clock—tree o'clock, and no bed; vell I see 'e sun afore a black fool put 'e head on a pillow! An' now a hoe go all 'e same as if he sleep a ten hour. Masser Myn'ert got a heart, and he no wish to kill he people wid work, or old Phyllis war dead fifty years next winter."

"I t'ink a wench's tongue nebber satisfy. What for tell a whole world when Bonnie go to bed? He sleep for heself, and he no sleep for 'e neighborhood! Dere! A man can't t'ink of eberyt'ing in a minute. Here a ribbon long enough to hang heself—take him and den remem'er, Phyllis, dat you be 'e wife of a man who hab care on his shoul'er."

Bonnie then set up another laugh, in which his partner, having quitted her scullery to seize the gift, which in its colors resembled the skin of a garter-snake, did not fail to join through mere excess of animal delight. The effect of the gift, however, was to leave the negro to make his observations, without any farther interruptions from one who was a little apt to disturb his solitude.

A boat was now seen to pull out from among the bushes that lined the shore; and Bonnie was able to distinguish in its stern sheets the persons of his master, Ludlow, and the Patroon. He had been acquainted with the seizure of the *Coquette's* barge the preceding night, and with the confinement of the crew. Its appearance in that place, therefore, occasioned no new surprise. But the time which passed while the men were rowing up to the sloop of war was filled with minutes of increasing interest. The black abandoned his hoe, and took a position on the side of the mountain that gave him a view of the whole bay. So long as the mysteries of the Lust in Rust had been confined to the ordinary combinations of a secret trade, he had been fully able to comprehend them; but now that there apparently existed an alliance so unnatural as one between his master and the cruiser of the crown, he felt the necessity of double observation and of greater thought.

A far more enlightened mind than that of the slave might have been excited by the expectation and the objects which now presented themselves, especially if sufficiently prepared for events by the knowledge of the two vessels in sight. Though the wind still hung at east, the cloud above the Raritan at length began to rise.

The broad fleeces of white vapor, that had lain the whole morning over the continent were rapidly uniting; and they formed already a dark and dense mass, that floated in the bottom of the estuary, threatening shortly to roll over the whole of its wide waters. The air was getting lighter, and variable; and while the wash of the surf sounded still more audible, its roll upon the beach was less regular than in the earlier hours of the day. Such was the state of the two elements, when the boat touched the side of the ship. In a minute it was hanging by its tackles high in the air; then it disappeared in the bosom of the dark mass.

It far exceeded the intelligence of Bonnie to detect, now, any farther signs of preparation in either of the two vessels which absorbed the whole of his attention. They appeared to him to be alike without motion, and equally without people. There were, it is true, a few specks in the rigging of the *Coquette,* which might be seen; but the distance prevented him from being sure of the fact; and admitting them to be seamen busied aloft, there were no visible consequences of their presence that his uninstructed eye could trace. In a minute or two, even these scattered specks were seen no longer; though the attentive black thought the mastheads and the rigging beneath the tops thickened, as if surrounded by more than their usual mazes of ropes. At that moment of suspense the cloud over the Raritan emitted a flash. This seemed to be a signal for the cruiser; for when the eye of Bonnie, which had been directed toward the heavens, returned toward the ship, he saw that she had opened and hoisted her three topsails, seemingly with as little exertion as an eagle would have spread his wings.

The ship now became uneasy; for the wind came in puffs, and the vessel rolled lightly, as if struggling to extricate itself from the anchor; and precisely at the moment when the shift of wind was felt, and the breeze came from the cloud in the west, the cruiser whirled away from its constrained position, and appearing for a short space restless as a steed that had broken from its fastening, it came up heavily to the wind, and lay balanced by the action of its sails. There was another minute or two of seeming inactivity, after which the broad surfaces of the topsails were brought in parallel lines. One white sheet was spread after another upon the fabric; and Bonnie saw that the *Coquette,* the swiftest cruiser of the crown in those

seas, was dashing out from the land under a cloud of canvas.

All this time the brigantine in the Cove lay quietly at her anchor. When the wind shifted, the light hull swung with its currents, and the image of the sea-green lady was seen offering her dark cheek to be fanned by the breeze. But she alone seemed to watch over the fortunes of her followers, for no other eye could be seen looking out on the danger that began so seriously to threaten them, both from the heavens, and from a more certain and intelligible foe.

As the wind was fresh, though unsteady, the *Coquette* moved through the water with a velocity that did no discredit to her reputation for speed. At first it seemed to be the intention of the royal cruiser to round the cape, and gain an offing in the open sea, for her head was directed northwardly; but no sooner had she cleared the curve of the little bight which, from its shape, is known by the name of the Horse Shoe, than she was seen shooting directly into the eye of the wind, and falling off with the graceful and easy motion of a ship in stays, her head looking towards the Lust in Rust. Her design on the notorious dealer in contraband was now too evident to admit of doubt.

Still, the *Water-Witch* betrayed no symptoms of alarm. The meaning eye of the image seemed to study the motions of her adversary with all the understanding of an intelligent being; and occasionally the brigantine turned slightly in the varying currents of the air, as if volition directed the movements of the little fabric. These changes resembled the quick and slight movements of the hound, as he lifts his head in his lair, to listen to some distant sound, or to scent some passing taint in the gale.

In the meantime the approach of the ship was so swift as to cause the negro to shake his head with a meaning that exceeded even his usually important look.

Everything was propitious to her progress; and as the water of the Cove, during the periods that the inlet remained open, was known to be of a sufficient depth to admit of her entrance, the faithful Bonnie began to anticipate a severe blow to the future fortunes of his master. The only hope that he could perceive for the escape of the smuggler, was in the changes of the heavens.

Although the threatening cloud had now quitted the mouth of the Raritan, and was rolling eastward with fearful velocity, it had not yet broken. The air had the unnatural and heated appearance which precedes a gust; but, with the exception of a few large drops, that fell seemingly from a clear sky, it was as yet what is called a dry squall. The water of the bay was occasionally dark, angry, and green; and there were moments when it would appear as if heavy currents of air descended to its surface, wantonly to try their power on the sister element. Notwithstanding these sinister omens, the *Coquette* stood on her course, without lessening the wide surface of her canvas by a single inch. They who governed her movements were no men of the lazy Levant, nor of the mild waters of the Mediterranean, to tear their hair, and call on saints to stand between their helplessness and harm; but mariners trained in a boisterous sea, and accustomed to place their first dependence on their own good manhood, aided by the vigilance and skill of a long and severely exercised experience. A hundred eyes on board that cruiser watched the advance of the rolling cloud, or looked upon the play of light and shade, that caused the color of the water to vary; but it was steadily, and with an entire dependence on the discretion of the young officer who controlled the movements of the ship.

Ludlow himself paced the deck with all his usual composure, so far as might be seen by external signs; though in reality his mind was agitated by feelings that were foreign to the duties of his station. He, too, had thrown occasional glances at the approaching squall, but his eye was far oftener riveted on the motionless brigantine, which was now distinctly to be seen from the deck of the *Coquette*, still riding at her anchor. The cry of "A stranger in the Cove!" which a few

minutes before came out of one of the tops caused no surprise in the commander; while the crew, wondering but obedient, began for the first time to perceive the object of their strange maneuvers. Even the officer next in authority to the captain had not presumed to make any inquiry, though now that the object of their search was so evidently in view, he felt emboldened to presume on his rank, and to venture a remark.

"It is a sweet craft!" said the staid lieutenant, yielding to an admiration natural to his habits, "and one that might serve as a yacht for the Queen! This is some trifler with the revenue, or perhaps a buccaneer from the islands. The fellow shows no ensign!"

"Give him notice, sir, that he has to do with one who bears the royal commission," returned Ludlow, speaking from habit, and half unconscious of what he said. "We must teach these rovers to respect a pennant."

The report of a cannon startled the absent man, and caused him to remember the order.

"Was that gun shotted?" he asked, in a tone that sounded like rebuke.

"Shotted, but pointed wide, sir; merely a broad hint. We are no dealers in dumb show in the *Coquette*, Captain Ludlow."

"I would not injure the vessel, even should it prove a buccaneer. Be careful that nothing strikes her, without an order."

"Aye, 'twill be well to take the beauty alive, sir; so pretty a boat should not be broken up, like an old hulk. Ha! there goes his bunting at last! He shows a white field—can the fellow be a Frenchman, after all?"

The lieutenant took a glass, and for a moment applied it to his eye with the usual steadiness. Then he suffered the instrument to fall, and it would seem that he endeavored to recall the different flags that he had seen during the experience of many years.

"This joker should come from some terra incognita." he said. "Here is a woman in his field, with an ugly countenance, too, unless the glass plays me false —as I live, the rogue has her counterpart for a figure-head! Will you look at the ladies, sir?"

Ludlow took the glass, and it was not without curiosity that he turned it toward the colors the hardy smuggler dared to exhibit in presence of a cruiser. The vessels were, by this time, sufficiently near each other to enable him to distinguish the swarthy features and malign smile of the sea-green lady, whose form was wrought in the field of the ensign, with the same art as that which he had seen so often displayed in other parts of the brigantine. Amazed at the daring of the freetrader, he returned the glass and continued to pace the deck in silence. There stood near the two speakers an officer whose head and form began to show the influence of time, and who, from his position, had unavoidably been an auditor of what passed. Though the eye of this person, who was the sailing-master of the sloop, was rarely off the threatening cloud, except to glance along the wide show of canvas that was spread, he found a moment to take a look at the stranger.

"A half-rigged brig, with her fore-top-gallant-mast fitted abaft, a double martingale, and a standing-gaff," observed the methodical and technical mariner, as another would have recounted the peculiarities of complexion or of feature in some individual who was the subject of a personal description. "The rogue has no need of showing his brazen-faced trull to be known! I chased him for six-and-thirty hours, in the chops of St. George's, no later than last season; and the fellow ran about us like a dolphin playing under a ship's fore-foot. We had him now on our weather bow, and now crossing our course, and, once in a while, in our way, as if he had been a Mother Carey's chicken looking for our crumbs. He seems snug enough in that cove, to be sure, yet I'll wager the pay of any month in the twelve that he gives us the slip. Captain Ludlow, the brigantine under our lee here, in Spermaceti, is the well-known Skimmer of the Seas!"

"The Skimmer of the Seas!" echoed twenty voices, in a manner to show the

interest created by the unexpected information.

"I'll swear to his character before any Admiralty Judge in England, or even in France, should there be occasion to go into an outlandish court—but no need of an oath, when here is a written account I took, with my own hands, having the chase in plain view, at noonday." While speaking, the sailing-master took a tobacco-box from his pocket, and removing a coil of pig-tail, he came to a deposit of memorandums that vied with the weed itself in color. "Now, gentlemen," he continued, "you shall have her build as justly as if the master-carpenter had laid it down with his rule. 'Remember to bring a muff of marten's fur from America, for Mrs. Trysail—buy it in London, and swear'—this is not the paper—I let your boy, Mr. Luff, stow away the last entry of tobacco for me, and the young dog has disturbed every document I own. This is the way the government accounts get jammed, when Parliament wants to overhaul them. But I suppose young blood will have its run! I let a monkey into a church of a Saturday night myself, when a youngster, and he made such stowage of the prayer-books that the whole parish was by the ears for six months; and there is one quarrel between two old ladies that has not been made up to this hour. Ah! here we have it: 'Skimmer of the Seas. Full-rigged forward, with fore-and-aft mainsail abaft; a gaff-topsail, taut in her spars, with light top-hamper; neat in his gear, as any beauty. Carries a ring tail in light weather; main-boom like a frigate's topsail-yard, with a main-topmast-staysail as big as a jib. Low in the water, with a woman figure-head; carries sail more like a devil than a human being, and lies within four and a half points, when jammed up hard on a wind.' Here are marks by which one of Queen Anne's maids of honor might know the rogue; and there you see them all, as plainly as human nature can show them in a ship!"

"The Skimmer of the Seas!" repeated the young officers, crowding around the veteran tar, to hear this characteristic description of the notorious freetrader.

"Skimmer or flyer, we have him now, dead under our lee, with a sandy beach on three of his sides, and the wind in his eye!" cried the first lieutenant. "You shall have an opportunity, Master Trysail, of correcting your account by actual measurement."

The sailing-master shook his head, like one who doubted, and again turned his eye on the approaching cloud.

The *Coquette* by this time had run so far as to have the entrance of the Cove open; and she was separated from her object only by a distance of a few cables' length. In obedience to an order given by Ludlow, all the light canvas of the ship was taken in, and the vessel was left under her three topsails and jib. There remained, however, a question as to the channel; for it was not usual for ships of the *Coquette's* draught to be seen in that quarter of the bay, and the threatening state of the weather rendered caution doubly necessary. The pilot shrank from a responsibility which did not properly belong to his office, since the ordinary navigation had no concern with that secluded place; and even Ludlow, stimulated as he was by so many powerful motives, hesitated to incur a risk which greatly exceeded his duty.

There was something so remarkable in the apparent security of the smuggler, that it naturally led to the belief he was certain of being protected by some unknown obstacle; and it was decided to sound before the ship was hazarded. An offer to carry the freetrader with the boats, though plausible in itself, and perhaps the wisest course of all, was rejected by the commander, on an evasive plea of its being an uncertain issue, though, in truth, because he felt an interest in one whom he believed the brigantine to contain, which entirely forbade the idea of making the vessel the scene of so violent a struggle. A yawl was therefore lowered into the water, the main-topsail of the ship was thrown to the mast, and Ludlow himself, accompanied by the pilot and the master, proceeded to ascertain the best approach to the smuggler. A flash of lightning, with one of those thunder-claps

that are wont to be more terrific on this continent than in the other hemisphere, warned the young mariner of the necessity of haste, if he would regain his ship before the cloud, which still threatened them, should reach the spot where she lay. The boat pulled briskly into the Cove, both the master and the pilot sounding on each side, as fast as the leads could be cast from their hands and recovered.

"This will do," said Ludlow, when they had ascertained that they could enter. "I would lay the ship as close as possible to the brigantine, for I distrust her quiet. We will go nearer."

"A brazen witch, and one whose saucy eye and pert figure might lead any honest mariner into contraband, or even into sea-robbery!" half whispered Trysail, perhaps afraid to trust his voice within hearing of a creature that seemed almost endowed with the faculties of life. "Aye, this is the hussy! I know her by the book and her green jacket! But where are her people? The vessel is as quiet as the royal vault on a coronation day, when the last king and those who went before him commonly have the place to themselves. Here would be a pretty occasion to throw a boat's crew on her decks, and haul down yon impudent ensign, which bears the likeness of this wicked lady so bravely in the air, if——"

"If what?" asked Ludlow, struck with the plausible character of the proposal.

"Why, if one were sure of the nature of such a minx, sir; for to own the truth, I would rather deal with a regularly-built Frenchman, who showed his guns honestly, and kept such a jabbering aboard that one might tell his bearings in the dark. The creature spoke!"

Ludlow did not reply, for a heavy crash of thunder succeeded the vivid glow of a flash of lightning, and glared so suddenly across the swarthy lineaments as to draw the involuntary exclamation from Trysail. The intimation that came from the cloud was not to be disregarded. The wind, which had so long varied, began to be heard in the rigging of the silent brigantine; and the two elements exhibited unequivocal evidence, in their menacing and fitful colors, of the near approach of the gust. The young sailor, with an absorbing interest, turned his eyes on his ship. The yards were on the caps, the bellying canvas was fluttering far to leeward, and twenty or thirty human forms on each spar showed that the nimble-fingered topmen were gathering in and knotting sails down to a close reef.

"Give way, men, for your lives!" cried the excited Ludlow.

A single dash of the oars was heard, and the yawl was already twenty feet from the mysterious image. Then followed a desperate struggle to regain the cruiser, ere the gust should strike her. The sullen murmur of the wind, rushing through the rigging of the ship, was audible some time before they reached her side; and the struggles between the fabric and the elements were at moments so violent as to cause the young commander to fear he would be too late.

The foot of Ludlow touched the deck of the *Coquette* at the instant the weight of the squall fell upon her sails. He no longer thought of any interest but that of the moment; with all the feelings of a seaman, his mind was now full of his ship.

"Let run everything!" shouted the ready officer, in a voice that made itself heard above the roar of the wind. "Clue down, and hand! Away aloft, you topmen! lay out! furl away!"

These orders were given in rapid succession, and without a trumpet, for the young man could, at need, speak loud as the tempest. They were succeeded by one of those exciting and fearful minutes that are so familiar to mariners. Each man was intent on his duty, while the elements worked their will around him as madly as if the hand by which they are ordinarily restrained was forever removed. The bay was a sheet of foam, while the rushing of the gust resembled the dull rumbling of a thousand chariots. The ship yielded to the pressure, until the water was seen gushing through her lee-scuppers, and her tall line of masts inclined toward the plane of the bay, as if the ends of the yards were about to dip into the water. But this was no more

than the first submission to the shock. The well-molded fabric recovered its balance, and struggled through its element, as if conscious that there was security only in motion. Ludlow glanced his eye to leeward. The opening of the Cove was favorably situated, and he caught a glimpse of the spars of the brigantine, rocking violently in the squall. He spoke to demand if the anchors were clear; then he was heard, shouting again from his station in the weather gangway:

"Hard a-weather!"

The first efforts of the cruiser to obey her helm, stripped as she was of canvas, were labored and slow. But when her head began to fall off, the driving scud was scarce swifter than her motion. At that moment, the sluices of the cloud opened, and a torrent of rain mingled in the uproar and added to the confusion. Nothing was now visible but the lines of falling water, and the sheet of white foam through which the ship was glancing.

"Here is the land, sir!" bellowed Trysail, from a cathead, where he stood resembling some venerable sea-god, dripping with his native element. "We are passing it like a race-horse."

"See your bowers clear!" shouted back the Captain.

"Ready, sir, ready!"

Ludlow motioned to the men at the wheel to bring the ship to the wind; and when her way was sufficiently deadened, two ponderous anchors dropped, at another signal, into the water. The vast fabric was not checked without a farther and tremendous struggle. When the bows felt the restraint, the ship swung head to wind, and fathom after fathom of the enormous ropes was extracted by surges so violent as to cause the hull to quiver to its center. But the first lieutenant and Trysail were no novices in their duty, and in less than a minute they had secured the vessel steadily at her anchors. When this important service was performed, officers and crew stood looking at each other like men who had just made a hazardous and fearful experiment. The view again opened, and objects on the land became visible through the still falling rain. The change was like that from night to day. Men who had passed their lives on the sea drew long and relieving breaths, conscious that the danger was happily passed. As the more pressing interest of their own situation abated, they remembered the object of their search. All eyes were turned in quest of the smuggler; but, by some inexplicable means, he had disappeared.

"The Skimmer of the Seas!" and "What has become of the brigantine?" were exclamations that the discipline of a royal cruiser could not repress. They were repeated by a hundred mouths, while twice as many eyes sought to find the beautiful fabric. All looked in vain. The spot where the *Water-Witch* had so lately lain was vacant, and no vestige of her wreck lined the shores of the Cove. During the time the ship was handing her sails, and preparing to enter the Cove, no one had leisure to look for the stranger; and after the vessel had anchored, until that moment, it was not possible to see her length on any side of them.

There was still a dense mass of falling water moving seaward; but the curious and anxious eyes of Ludlow made fruitless efforts to penetrate its secrets. Once, indeed, more than an hour after the gust had reached his own ship, and when the ocean in the offing was clear and calm, he thought he could distinguish, far to seaward, the delicate tracery of a vessel's spars, drawn against the horizon, without any canvas set. But a second look did not assure him of the truth of the conjecture.

There were many extraordinary tales related that night on board her Britannic Majesty's ship *Coquette*. The boatswain affirmed that, while piping below in order to overhaul the cables, he had heard a screaming in the air that sounded as if a hundred devils were mocking him, and which he told the gunner in confidence he believed was no more than the winding of a call on board the brigantine, who had taken occasion, when other vessels were glad to anchor, to get under way in her own fashion. There was also a fore-topman named Robert Yarn, a fellow whose

faculty for story-telling equaled that of Scheherazade, and who not only asserted, but who confirmed the declaration by many strange oaths, that while he lay on the lee fore-topsail yardarm, stretching forth an arm to grasp the leech of the sail, a dark-looking female fluttered over his head, and caused her long hair to whisk into his face, in a manner that compelled him to shut his eyes, which gave occasion to a smart reprimand from the reefer of the top. There was a feeble attempt to explain this assault by the man who lay next to Yarn, who affected to think the hair was no more than the end of a gasket whipping in the wind; but his shipmate, who had pulled one of the oars of the yawl, soon silenced this explanation by the virtue of his long-established reputation for veracity. Even Trysail ventured several mysterious conjectures concerning the fate of the brigantine in the gunroom; but, on returning from the duty of sounding the inlet, whither he had been sent by his captain, he was less communicative and more thoughtful than usual. It appeared, indeed, from the surprise that was manifested by every officer that heard the report of the quartermaster, who had given the casts of the lead on this service, that no one in the ship, with the exception of Alderman Van Beverout, was at all aware that there was rather more than two fathoms of water in that secret passage.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Sirs, take your places, and be vigilant."
—HENRY IV.

THE succeeding day was one in which the weather had a fixed character. The wind was east, and, though light, not fluctuating. The air had that thick and hazy appearance which properly belongs to the autumn in this climate, but which is sometimes seen at midsummer, when a dry wind blows from the ocean. The roll of the surf on the shore was regular and monotonous, and the currents of the air were so steady as to remove every apprehension of a change. The moment to which the action of the tale is transferred was in the earlier hours of the afternoon.

At that time the *Coquette* lay again at her anchors, just within the shelter of the cape. There were a few small sails to be seen passing up the bay; but the scene, as was common to that distant day, presented little of the activity of our own times. The windows of the Lust in Rust were again open, and the movement of the slaves in and about the villa announced the presence of its master.

The Alderman was in truth, at the hour named, pacing the little lawn in front of la Cour des Fees, accompanied by Oloff Van Staats and the commander of the cruiser. It was evident, by the frequent glances which the latter threw in the direction of the pavilion, that he still thought of her who was absent; while the faculties of the two others were either in better subjection, or less stimulated by anxiety. One who understood the character of the individual, and who was acquainted with the past, might have suspected, by this indifference on the part of the Patroon, placed as it was in such a singular contrast to a sort of mysterious animation which enlivened a countenance whose ordinary expression was placid content, that the young suitor thought less than formerly of the assets of old Etienne, and more of the secret pleasure he found in the singular incidents of which he had been a witness.

"Propriety and discretion!" observed the burgher, in reply to a remark of one of the young men, "I say again, for the twentieth time, that we shall have Alida Barberie back among us as handsome, as innocent, aye, and as rich as ever!—perhaps I should also say, as willful. A baggage to worry her old uncle, and two honorable suitors in so thoughtless a manner. Circumstances, gentlemen," continued the wary merchant, who saw that the value of the hand of which he had to dispose was somewhat reduced in the market, "have placed you on a footing in my esteem. Should my niece, after all, prefer Captain Ludlow for a partner, in her worldy affairs, why, it should not weaken

friendship between the son of old Stephanus Van Staats and Myndert Van Beverout. Our grandmothers were cousins, and there should be charities in the same blood."

"I could not wish to press my suit," returned the Patroon, "when the lady has given so direct a hint that it was disagreeable——"

"Hint me no hints! Do you call this caprice of a moment, this trifling, as the Captain here would call it, with the winds and tides, a hint! The girl has Norman blood in her veins, and she wished to put animation into the courtship. If bargains were to be interrupted by a little cheapening of the buyer, and some affectation of waiting for a better market in the seller, her Majesty might as well order her custom-houses to be closed at once, and look to other resources for revenue. Let the girl's fancy have its swing, and the profits of a year's peltry against thy rent-roll, we shall see her penitent for her folly, and willing to hear reason. My sister's daughter is no witch to go journeying forever about the world on a broomstick!"

"There is a tradition in our family," said Oloff Van Staats, his eye lighting with a mysterious excitement, while he affected to laugh at the folly he uttered, "that the great Poughkeepsie fortune-teller foretold, in the presence of my grandmother, that a Patroon of Kinderhook should intermarry with a witch. So, should I see la Belle in the position you name, it would not greatly alarm me."

"The prophecy was fulfilled at the wedding of thy father!" muttered Myndert, who, notwithstanding the outward levity with which he treated the subject, was not entirely free from secret reverence for the provincial soothsayers, some of whom continued in high repute even to the close of the last century. "His son would not else have been so clever a youth! But here is Captain Ludlow looking at the ocean as if he expected to see my niece rise out of the water in the shape of a mermaid."

The commander of the *Coquette* pointed to the object which attracted his gaze, and which, appearing as it did at that moment, was certainly not of a nature to lessen the faith of either of his companions in supernatural agencies.

It has been said that the wind was dry, and the air misty, or rather so pregnant with a thin haze as to give it the appearance of a dull, smoky light. In such a state of the weather, the eye, more especially of one placed on an elevation, is unable to distinguish what is termed the visible horizon at sea. The two elements become so blended, that our organs cannot tell where the water ends, or where the void of the heavens commences. It is a consequence of this indistinctness that any object seen beyond the apparent boundary of water has the appearance of floating in the air. It is rare for the organs of a landsman to penetrate beyond the apparent limits of the sea, when the atmosphere exhibits this peculiarity, though the practiced eye of a mariner often detects vessels which are hid from others, merely because they are not sought in the proper place. The deception may also be aided by a slight degree of refraction.

"Here," said Ludlow, pointing in a line that would have struck the water some two or three leagues in the offing, "first bring the chimney of yonder low building on the plain in a range with the dead oak on the shore, and then raise your eyes slowly, till they strike a sail."

"That ship is navigating the heavens!" exclaimed Myndert. "Thy grandmother was a sensible woman, Patroon; she was a cousin of my progenitor, and there is no knowing what two clever old ladies in their time may have heard and seen, when such sights as this are beheld in our own!"

"I am as little disposed as another to put faith in incredible things," gravely returned Oloff Van Staats; "and yet if required to give my testimony, I should be reluctant to say that yonder vessel is not floating in the heavens!"

"You might not give it to that effect in safety," said Ludlow. "It is no other than a half-rigged brigantine on a taut

bowline, though she bears no great show of canvas. Mr. Van Beverout, her Majesty's cruiser is about to put to sea."

Myndert heard this declaration in visible dissatisfaction. He spoke of the virtue of patience, and of the comforts of the solid ground; but when he found the intention of the Queen's servant was not to be shaken, he reluctantly professed an intention of repeating the personal experiment of the preceding day. Accordingly, within half an hour the whole party were on the banks of the Shrewsbury, and about to embark in the barge of the *Coquette*.

"Adieu, Monsieur Francois," said the Alderman, nodding his head to the ancient valet, who stood with a disconsolate air on the shore. "Have a care of the movables in la Cour des Fees; we have further use for them."

"Mais, Monsieur Bevre', mon devoir et ma foi, suppose la mer was plus agreable, mon desir shall be to suivre Mam'selle Alide. Jamais personne de la famille Barberie love de sea; mais, Monsieur, comment faire? I shall die sur la mer de douleur; and I shall die d'ennui to rester ici bien sur!"

"Come then, faithful Francois," said Ludlow. "You shall follow your young mistress; and perhaps on further trial you may be disposed to think the lives of us seamen more tolerable than you had believed."

After an eloquent expression of countenance, in which the secretly amused, though grave-looking boat's crew thought the old man was about to give a specimen of his powers of anticipation, the affectionate domestic entered the barge. Ludlow felt for his distress, and encouraged him by a look of approbation. The language of kindness does not always need a tongue; and the conscience of the valet smote him with the idea that he might have expressed himself too strongly concerning a profession to which the other had devoted life and hopes.

"La mer, Monsieur le Capitaine," he said, with an acknowledging reverence, "est un vaste theatre de la gloire. Voila Messieurs de Tourville et Dougay Trouin; ce sont des hommes vraiment remarquables! mais, Monsieur, quant a tout la famille de Barberie, we have toujours un sentiment plus favorable pour la terre."

"I wish your whimsical jade of a mistress, Master Francois, had found the same sentiment," dryly observed Myndert; "for let me tell you, this cruising about in a suspicious vessel is as little creditable to her judgment as—cheer up, Patroon; the girl is only putting thy metal to trial, and the sea air will do no damage to her complexion or her pocket. A little predilection for salt water must raise the girl in your estimation, Captain Ludlow?"

"If the predilection goes no farther than the element, sir," was the caustic answer. "But, deluded or not, erring or deceived, Alida Barberie is not to be deserted, the victim of a villain's arts. I did love your niece, Mr. Van Beverout, and—pull with a will, men; are you sleeping on the oars?"

The sudden manner in which the young man interrupted himself, and the depth of tone in which he spoke to the boat's crew, put an end to the discourse. It was apparent that he wished to say no more, and that he even regretted the weakness which had induced him to say so much. The remainder of the distance between the shore and the ship was passed in silence.

When Queen Anne's cruiser was seen doubling Sandy Hook, past meridian on the 6th June (sea-time) in the year 17—, the wind, as stated in an ancient journal, which was kept by one of the midshipmen, and is still in existence, was light, steady at south and by west half-west. It appears, by the same document, that the vessel took her departure at seven o'clock, P.M., the point of Sandy Hook bearing west-half-south, distant three leagues. On the same page which contains these particulars it is observed, under the head of remarks, "Ship under starboard studding sails, forward and aft, making six knots. A suspicious half-rigged brigantine lying-to in the eastern board, under her mainsail, with fore-topsail to the mast; light and lofty sails and jib loose; foresail in the brails. Her starboard studdingsail-booms appear to be rigged out, and the gear rove ready for a run. This vessel is

supposed to be the celebrated hermaphrodite *Water-Witch*, commanded by the notorious Skimmer of the Seas, and the same fellow who gave us so queer a slip yesterday. The Lord send us a capful of wind, and we'll try his heels before morning! Passengers, Alderman Van Beverout, of the second ward of the city of New York, in her Majesty's province of the same name; Oloff Van Staats, Esq., commonly called the Patroon of Kinderhook, of the same colony; and a qualmish-looking old chap, in a sort of marine's jacket, who answers when hailed as Francois. A rum set, taken altogether, though they seem to suit the Captain's fancy. Mem.: Each lipper of a wave works like tartar emetic on the lad in marine gear."

As no description of ours can give a more graphic account of the position of the two vessels in question, at the time named, than that which is contained in the foregoing extract, we shall take up the narrative at that moment which the reader will see must, in the fortieth degree of latitude, and in the month of June, have been shortly after the close of day.

The young votary of Neptune, whose opinions have just been quoted, had indeed presumed on his knowledge of the localities, in affirming the distance and position of the cape, since the low sandy point was no longer visible from the deck. The sun had set, as seen from the vessel, precisely in the mouth of the Raritan; and the shadows from Navesink, or Neversink, as the hills are vulgarly called, were thrown far upon the sea.

In short, the night was gathering round the mariners, with every appearance of settled and mild weather, but of a darkness deeper than was common on the ocean. Under such circumstances the great object was to keep on the track of the chase, during the time when she must necessarily be hid from their sight.

Ludlow walked into the lee gangway of his ship, and, leaning with his elbow on the empty hammock-cloths, he gazed long in silence at the object of his pursuit. The *Water-Witch* was lying in the quarter of the horizon most favorable to being seen. The twilight, which still fell out of the heavens, was without glare in that direction; and for the first time in that day he saw her in her true proportions. The admiration of a seaman was blended with the other sensations of the young man. The brigantine lay in the position that exhibited her exquisitely molded hull and rakish rig to the most advantage. The head, having come to the wind, was turned toward her pursuer; and as the bows rose on some swell that was heavier than common, Ludlow saw, or fancied he saw, the mysterious image still perched on the cutwater, holding the book to the curious, and ever pointing with its finger across the waste of water. A movment of the hammock-cloths caused the young sailor to bend his head aside, and he then saw that the master had drawn as near his person as discipline would warrant. Ludlow had a great respect for the professional attainments that his inferior unquestionably possessed; and he was not without some consideration for the chances of a fortune which had not done much to reward the privations and the services of a seaman old enough to be his father. The recollection of these facts always disposed him to be indulgent to a man who had little beyond his seaman-like character and long experience to recommend him.

"We are likely to have a thick night, Master Trysail," said the young Captain, without deeming it necessary to change his look, "and we may yet be brought on a bowline before yonder insolent is overhauled."

The master smiled like one who knew more than he expressed, and gravely shook his head.

"We may have many pulls on our bowlines, and some squaring of yards, too, before the Coquette (the figure-head of the sloop-of-war was also a female) gets near enough to the dark-faced woman under the bowsprit of the brigantine to whisper her mind. You and I have been nigh enough to see the white of her eyes, and to count the teeth she shows in that cunning grin of hers—and what good has come of our visit? I am but a subordinate, Captain Ludlow, and I know my

duty too well not to be silent in a squall, and I hope too well not to know how to speak when my commander wishes the opinions of his officers at a counsel; and therefore mine, just now, is perhaps different from that of some others in this ship that I will not name, who are good men, too, though none of the oldest."

"And what is thy opinion, Trysail?—the ship is doing well, and she carries her canvas bravely?"

"The ship behaves like a well-bred young woman in the presence of the Queen; modest, but stately—but of what use is canvas, in a chase where witchcraft breeds squalls and shortens sail in one vessel, while it gives flying kites to another! If her Majesty, God bless her! should be ever persuaded to do so silly a thing as to give old Tom Trysail a ship, and the said ship lay, just here-away, where the *Coquette* is now getting along so cleverly, why then, as in duty bound, I know very well what her commander would do——"

"Which would be——"

"To in all studding-sails, and bring the vessel on the wind."

"That would be to carry you to the southward, while the chase lies here in the eastern board!"

"Who can say how long she will lie there? They told us, in York, that there was a Frenchman, of our burden and metal, rummaging about among the fishermen, lower down on the coast. Now, sir, no man knows that the war is half over better than myself, for not a ha'penny of prize money has warmed my pocket these three years; but, as I was saying, if a Frenchman will come off his ground, and will run his ship into troubled water, why—whose fault is it but his own? A pretty affair might be made out of such a mistake, Captain Ludlow; whereas running after yonder brigantine is flapping out the Queen's canvas for nothing. The vessel's bottom will want new sheathing, in my opinion, before you catch him."

"I know not, Trysail," returned his captain, glancing an eye aloft; "everything draws, and the ship never went along with less trouble to herself. We shall not know which has the longest legs till the trial is made."

"You may judge of the rogue's speed by his impudence. There he lies, waiting for us, like a line-of-battle ship lying-to for an enemy to come down. Though a man of some experience in my way, I have never seen a lord's son more sure of promotion than that same brigantine seems to be of his heels! If this old Frenchman goes on with his faces much longer, he will turn himself inside out, and then we shall get an honest look at him, for these fellows never carry their true characters aboveboard, like a fair-dealing Englishman. Well, sir, as I was remarking, yon rover, if rover he be, has more faith in his canvas than in the church. I make no doubt, Captain Ludlow, that the brigantine went through the inlet while we were handling our topsails yesterday; for I am none of those who are in a hurry to give credit to any will-o'-the-wisp tale; besides which, I sounded the passage with my own hands, and know the thing to be possible, with the wind blowing heavy over the taffrail; still, sir, human nature is human nature, and what is the oldest seaman after all but a man? And so, to conclude, I would rather any day chase a Frenchman, whose disposition is known to me, than have the credit of making traverses for eight-and-forty hours, in the wake of one of these flyers, with little hope of getting him within hail."

"You forget, Master Trysail, that I have been aboard the chase, and know something of his build and character."

"They say as much aboard here," returned the old tar, drawing nearer to the person of his captain, under an impulse of strong curiosity; "though none presume to be acquainted with the particulars. I am not one of those who ask impertinent questions, more especially under her Majesty's pennant; for the worst enemy I have will not say I am very womanish. One would think, however, that there was neat work on board a craft that is so prettily molded about her water lines?"

"She is perfect as to construction, and admirable in gear."

"I thought as much, by instinct! Her

commander need not, however, be any the more sure of keeping her off the rocks on that account. The prettiest young woman in our parish was wrecked, as one might say, on the shoals of her own good looks, having cruised once too often in the company of the squire's son. A comely wench she was, though she luffed athwart all her old companions when the young lord of the manor fell into her wake. Well, she did bravely enough, sir, as long as she could carry her flying kites, and make a fair wind of it; but when the squall, of which I spoke, overtook her, what could she do but keep away before it?—and as others who are snugger in their morals hove-to as it were, under the storm-sails of religion and such matters as they had picked up in the catechism, she drifted to leeward of all honest society! A neatly-built and clean-heeled hussy was that girl; and I am not certain, by any means, that Mrs. Trysail would this day call herself the lady of a queen's officer had the other known how to carry sail in the company of her betters."

The worthy master drew a long breath, which possibly was a nautical sigh, but which certainly had more of the north wind than of the zephyr in its breathing; and he had recourse to the little box of iron, whence he usually drew consolation.

"I have heard of this accident before," returned Ludlow, who had sailed as a midshipman in the same vessel with, and indeed as a subordinate to, his present inferior. "But, from all accounts, you have little reason to regret the change, as I hear the best character of your present worthy partner."

"No doubt, sir, no doubt. I defy any man in the ship to say that I am a backbiter, even against my wife, with whom I have a sort of lawful right to deal candidly. I make no complaints, and am a happy man at sea, and I piously hope Mrs. Trysail knows how to submit to her duty at home. I suppose you see, sir, that the chase has hauled his yards, and is getting his fore-tack aboard?"

Ludlow, whose eye did not often turn from the brigantine, nodded assent; and the master, having satisfied himself, by actual inspection, that every sail in the *Coquette* did its duty, continued, "The night is coming on thick, and we shall have occasion for all our eyes to keep the rogue in view, when he begins to change his bearings—but as I was saying, if the commander of yon half-rig is too vain of her good looks, he may yet wreck her, in his pride! The rogue has a desperate character as a smuggler, though, for my own part, I cannot say that I look on such men with as unfavorable an eye as some others. This business of trade seems to be a sort of chase between one man's wits and another man's wits, and the dullest goer must be content to fall to leeward. When it comes to be a question of revenue, why, he who goes free is lucky, and he who is caught, a prize. I have known a flag officer look the other way, Captain Ludlow, when his own effects were passing duty free; and as to your admiral's lady, she is a great patroness of the contraband. I do not deny, sir, that a smuggler must be caught, and when caught, condemned, after which there must be a fair distribution among the captors; but all I mean to say is, that there are worse men in the world than your British smuggler—such, for instance, as your Frenchman, your Dutchman, or your Don."

"These are heterodox opinions for a queen's servant," said Ludlow, as much inclined to smile as to frown.

"I hope I know my duty too well to preach them to the ship's company, but a man may say that, in a philosophical way, before his captain, that he would not let run into a midshipman's ear. Though no lawyer, I know what is meant by swearing a witness to the truth and nothing but the truth. I wish the Queen got the last, God bless her! several worn-out ships would then be broken up, and better vessels sent to sea in their places. But, sir, speaking in a religious point of view, what is the difference between passing in a trunk of finery, with a duchess's name on the brass plate, or in passing in gin enough to fill a cutter's hold?"

"One would think a man of your years, Mr. Trysail, would see the difference be-

tween robbing the revenue of a guinea, and robbing it of a thousand pounds."

"Which is just the difference between retail and wholesale—and that is no trifle, I admit, Captain Ludlow, in a commercial country, especially in genteel life. Still, sir, revenue is the country's right, therefore I allow a smuggler to be a bad man, only not so bad as those I have just named, particularly your Dutchman! The Queen is right to make those rogues lower their flags to her in the narrow seas, which are her lawful property; because England, being a wealthy island, and Holland no more than a bit of bog turned up to dry, it is reasonable that we should have the command afloat. No, sir, though none of your outcriers against a man because he has had bad luck in a chase with a revenue cutter, I hope I know what the natural rights of an Englishman are. We must be masters here, Captain Ludlow, will-ye-nill-ye, and look to the main chances of trade and manufactures!"

"I had not thought you so accomplished a statesman, Mr. Trysail!"

"Though a poor man's son, Captain Ludlow, I am a free-born Briton, and my education has not been entirely overlooked. I hope I know something of the constitution, as well as my betters. Justice and honor being an Englishman's mottoes, we must look manfully to the main chance. We are none of your flighty talkers, but a reasoning people, and there is no want of deep thinkers on the little island; and therefore, sir, taking all together, why, England must stick up for her rights! Here is your Dutchman, for instance, a ravenous cormorant: a fellow with a throat wide enough to swallow all the gold of the Great Mogul, if he could get at it: and yet a vagabond who has not even a fair footing on the earth, if the truth must be spoken. Well, sir, shall England give up her rights to a nation of such blackguards? No, sir; our venerable constitution and mother Church itself forbid; and therefore I say, dam'me, lay them aboard, if they refuse us any of our natural rights, or show a wish to bring us down to their own dirty level!"

"Reasoned like a countryman of Newton, and with an eloquence that would do credit to Cicero! I shall endeavor to digest your ideas at my leisure, since they are much too solid food to be disposed of in a minute. At present we will look to the chase, for I see, by the aid of my glass, that he has set his studding-sails, and is beginning to draw ahead."

This remark closed the dialogue between the Captain and his subordinate. The latter quitted the gangway with that secret and pleasurable sensation which communicates itself to all who have reason to think they have delivered themselves creditably of a train of profound thought.

It was, in truth, time to lend every faculty to the movements of the brigantine; for there was great reason to apprehend that, by changing her direction in the darkness, she might elude them. The night was fast closing on the *Coquette*, and at each moment the horizon narrowed around her, so that it was only at uncertain intervals the men aloft could distinguish the position of the chase. While the two vessels were thus situated, Ludlow joined his guests on the quarter-deck.

"A wise man will trust to his wits, what cannot be done by force," said the Alderman. "I do not pretend to be much of a mariner, Captain Ludlow, though I once spent a week in London, and I have crossed the ocean seven times to Rotterdam. We did little in our passages, by striving to force nature. When the nights came in dark, as at present, the honest skippers were content to wait for better times; by which means we were sure not to miss our road, and of finally arriving at the destined port in safety."

"You saw that the brigantine was opening his canvas, when last seen; and he that would move fast must have recourse to his sails."

"One never knows what may be brewing, up there in the heavens, when the eye cannot see the color of a cloud. I have little knowledge of the character of the Skimmer of the Seas beyond that which common fame gives him; but, in the poor judgment of a landsman, we should do better by showing lanterns in

different parts of the ship, lest some homeward bound vessel do us an injury, and waiting until the morning for farther movements."

"We are spared the trouble, for look, the insolent has set a light himself, as if to invite us to follow! This temerity exceeds belief! To dare to trifle thus with one of the swiftest cruisers in the English fleet! See that everything draws, gentlemen, and take a pull at all the sheets. Hail the tops, sir, and make sure that everything is home."

The order was succeeded by the voice of the officer of the watch, who inquired, as directed, if each sail was distended to the utmost. Force was applied to some of the ropes, and then a general quiet succeeded to the momentary activity.

The brigantine had indeed showed a light, as if in mockery of the attempt of the royal cruiser. Though secretly stung by this open contempt of their speed, the officers of the *Coquette* found themselves relieved from a painful and anxious duty. Before this beacon was seen, they were obliged to exert their senses to the utmost, in order to get occasional glimpses of the position of the chase; while they now steered in confidence for the brilliant little spot that was gently rising and falling with the waves.

"I think we near him," half whispered the eager captain; "see, there is some design visible on the sides of the lantern. Hold! Ah! 'tis the face of a woman, as I live."

"The men of the yawl report that the rover shows this symbol in many parts of his vessel, and we know he had the impudence to set it yesterday in our presence, even on his ensign."

"True—true; take you the glass, Mr. Luff, and tell me if there be not a woman's face sketched in front of that light—we certainly near him fast—let there be silence, fore and aft the ship. The rogues mistake our bearings!"

"A saucy-looking jade, as one might wish to see!" returned the lieutenant. "Her impudent laugh is visible to the naked eye."

"See all clear for laying him aboard! Get a party to throw on his decks, sir! I will lead them myself."

These orders were given in an undertone, and rapidly. They were promptly obeyed. In the meantime the *Coquette* continued to glide gently ahead, her sails thickening with the dew, and every breath of the heavy air acting with increased power on their surfaces. The boarders were stationed, orders were given for the most profound silence, and as the ship drew nearer to the light, even the officers were commanded not to stir. Ludlow stationed himself in the mizzen channels, to con the ship; and his directions were repeated to the quartermaster in a loud whisper.

"The night is so dark, we are certainly unseen!" observed the young man to his second in command, who stood at his elbow. "They have unaccountably mistaken our position. Observe how the face of the painting becomes more distinct—one can see even the curls of the hair. Luff, sir, luff—we will run him aboard on his weather quarter."

"The fool must be lying-to!" returned the lieutenant. "Even your witches fail of common-sense at times! Do you see which way he has his head, sir!"

"I see nothing but the light. It is so dark that our own sails are scarcely visible—yet I think here are his yards, a little forward of our lee beam."

"'Tis our own lower boom. I got it out in readiness for the other tack, in case the knave should wear. Are we not running too full?"

"Luff you may, a little—luff, or we shall crush him!"

As this order was given Ludlow passed swiftly forward. He found the boarders ready for a spring, and he rapidly gave his orders. The men were told to carry the brigantine at every hazard, but not to offer violence, unless serious resistance was made. They were thrice enjoined not to enter the cabins, and the young man expressed a generous wish that, in every case, the Skimmer of the Seas might be taken alive. By the time these directions were given the light was so near that the malign countenance of the sea-green lady

was seen in every lineament. Ludlow looked in vain for the spars, in order to ascertain in which direction the head of the brigantine lay; but, trusting to luck, he saw that the decisive moment was come.

"Starboard, and run him aboard! Away there, you boarders, away! Heave with your grapnels; heave, men, with a long swing, heave! Meet her, with the helm—hard down—meet her—steady!" was shouted in a clear, full, and steady voice, that seemed to deepen at each mandate which issued from the lips of the young Captain.

The boarders cheered heartily and leaped into the rigging. The *Coquette* readily and rapidly yielded to the power of her rudder. First inclining to the light, and then sweeping up toward the wind again, in another instant she was close upon the chase. The irons were thrown, the men once more shouted, and all on board held their breaths in expectation of the crash of the meeting hulls. At that moment of high excitement the woman's face rose a short distance in the air, seemed to smile in derision of their attempt, and suddenly disappeared. The ship passed steadily ahead, while no noise but the sullen wash of the waters was audible. The boarding-irons were heard falling heavily into the sea, and the *Coquette* rapidly overran the spot where the light had been seen, without sustaining any shock. Though the clouds lifted a little, and the eye might embrace a circuit of a few hundred feet, there certainly was nothing to be seen within its range but the unquiet element, and the stately cruiser of Queen Anne floating on its bosom.

Though its effects were different on the differently-constituted minds of those who witnessed the singular incident, the disappointment was general. The common impression was certainly unfavorable to the earthly character of the brigantine; and when opinions of this nature once get possession of the ignorant, they are not easily removed. Even Trysail, though experienced in the arts of those who trifle with the revenue laws, was much inclined to believe that this was no vulgar case of floating lights or false beacons, but a manifestation that others, besides those who had been regularly trained to the sea, were occasionally to be found on the waters.

If Captain Ludlow thought differently, he saw no sufficient reason to enter into an explanation with those who were bound silently to obey. He paced the quarter-deck for many minutes; then issued his orders to the equally disappointed lieutenants. The light canvas of the *Coquette* was taken in, the studding-sail gear unrove, and the booms secured. The ship was brought to the wind, and her courses having been hauled up, the fore-topsail was thrown to the mast. In this position the cruiser lay, waiting for the morning light, in order to give greater certainty to her movements.

CHAPTER XIX.

"I, John Turner,
Am master and owner
Of a high-decked schooner,
That's bound to Car'lina."
—COASTING SONG.

IT is not necessary to say, with how much interest Alderman Van Beverout, and his friend the Patroon, witnessed all the proceedings on board the *Coquette*. Something very like an exclamation of pleasure escaped the former, when it was known that the ship had missed the brigantine, and that there was now little probability of overtaking her that night.

"Of what use is it to chase your fire-flies about the ocean, Patroon?" muttered the Alderman, in the ear of Oloff Van Staats. "I have no farther knowledge of this Skimmer of the Seas, than is decent in the principal of a commercial house — but reputation is like a sky-rocket, that may be seen from afar! Her Majesty has no ship that can overtake the freetrader, and why fatigue the innocent vessel for nothing?"

"Captain Ludlow has other desires than the mere capture of the brigantine," returned the laconic and sententious Pa-

troon. "The opinion that Alida de Barberie is in her, has great influence with that gentleman."

"This is strange apathy, Mr. Van Staats, in one who is as good as engaged to my niece, if he be not actually married. Alida Barberie has great influence with that gentleman! And pray, with whom, that knows her, has she not influence?"

"The sentiment in favor of the young lady in general is favorable."

"Sentiment and favor! Am I to understand, sir, by this coolness, that our bargain is broken?—that the two fortunes are not to be brought together, and that the lady is not to be your wife?"

"Harkee, Mr. Van Beverout; one who is saving of his income and sparing of his words can have no pressing necessity for the money of others; and, on occasion, he may afford to speak plainly. Your niece has shown so decided a preference for another that it has materially lessened the liveliness of my regard."

"It were a pity that so much animation should fail of its object! It would be a sort of stoppage in the affairs of Cupid! Men should deal candidly in all business transactions, Mr. Van Staats; and you will permit me to ask, for a final settlement, if your mind is changed in regard to the daughter of old Etienne de Barberie, or not?"

"Not changed, but quite decided," returned the young Patroon. "I cannot say that I wish the successor of my mother to have seen so much of the world. We are a family that is content with our situation, and new customs would derange my household."

"I am no wizard, sir; but for the benefit of a son of my old friend Stephanus Van Staats, I will venture, for once, on a prophecy. You will marry, Mr. Van Staats—yes, marry—and you will wive sir, with—prudence prevents me from saying with whom you will wive; but you may account yourself a lucky man if it be not with one who will cause you to forget house and home, lands and friends, manors and rents, and in short all the solid comforts of life. It would not surprise me to hear that the prediction of the Poughkeepsie fortune-teller should be fulfilled!"

"And what is your real opinion, Alderman Van Beverout, of the different mysterious events we have witnessed?" demanded the Patroon, in a manner to prove that the interest he took in the subject completely smothered any displeasure he might otherwise have felt at so harsh a prophecy. "This sea-green lady is no common woman?"

"Sea-green and sky-blue!" interrupted the impatient burgher. "The hussy is but too common, sir; and there is the calamity. Had she been satisfied with transacting her concerns in a snug and reasonable manner, and to have gone upon the high seas again, we should have had none of this foolery to disturb accounts which ought to have been considered settled. Mr. Van Staats, will you allow me to ask a few direct questions, if you can find leisure for their answer?"

The Patroon nodded his head in the affirmative.

"What do you suppose, sir, to have become of my niece?"

"Eloped."

"And with whom?"

Van Staats of Kinderhook stretched an arm toward the open ocean, and again nodded. The Alderman mused a moment; then he chuckled, as if some amusing idea had got the better of his ill humor.

"Come, come, Patroon," he said in his wonted amicable tone, when addressing the lord of a hundred thousand acres, "this business is like a complicated account, a little difficult till one gets acquainted with the books, when all becomes plain as your hand. There were referees in the estate of Kobus Van Klinck, whom I will not name; but what between the handwriting of the old grocer, and some inaccuracy in the figures, they had but a blind time of it until they discovered which way the balance ought to come; then by working backward and forward, which is the true spirit of your just referee, they got all straight in the end. Kobus was not very lucid in his statements, and he was a little apt to be careless of ink. His ledger might be called a book of the

black art; for it was little else than fly-tracks and blots, though the last were found of great assistance in rendering the statements satisfactory. By calling three of the biggest of them sugar-hogheads, a very fair balance was struck between him and a peddling Yankee who was breeding trouble for the estate; and I challenge, even at this distant day, when all near interests in the results may be said to sleep, any responsible man to say that they did not look as much like those articles as anything else. Something they must have been, and as Kobus dealt largely in sugar, there was also a strong moral probability that they were the said hogsheads. Come, come, Patroon; we shall have the jade back again in proper time. Thy ardor gets the better of reason; but this is the way with true love, which is none the worse for a little delay. Alida is not one to balk thy merriment; these Norman wenches are not heavy of foot at a dance, or apt to go to sleep when the fiddles are stirring!"

With this consolation, Alderman Van Beverout saw fit to close the dialogue, for the moment. How far he succeeded in bringing back the mind of the Patroon to his allegiance, the result must show; though we shall take this occasion to observe again that the young proprietor found a satisfaction in the excitement of the present scene that, in the course of a short and little diversified life, he had never before experienced.

While others slept, Ludlow passed most of the night on deck. He laid himself down in the hammock-cloths, for an hour or two, as the night wore on; though the wind did not sigh through the rigging louder than common without arousing him from his slumbers. At each low call of the officer of the watch to the crew, his head was raised to glance around the narrow horizon; and the ship never rolled heavily without causing him to awake. He believed that the brigantine was near, and, for the first watch, he was not without expectation that the two vessels might unexpectedly meet in the obscurity. When this hope failed, the young seaman had recourse to artifice in his turn, in order to entrap one who appeared so practiced and so expert in the devices of the sea.

About midnight, when the watches were changed, and the whole crew, with the exception of the idlers, were on deck, orders were given to hoist out the boats. This operation, one of exceeding toil and difficulty in lightly-manned ships, was soon performed on board the Queen's cruiser, by the aid of yard and stay-tackles, to which the force of a hundred seamen was applied. When four of these little attendants on the ship were in the water, they were entered by their crews, prepared for service. Officers on whom Ludlow could rely were put in command of the three smallest, while he took charge of the fourth in person. When all were ready, and each inferior had received his especial instruction, they quitted the side of the vessel, pulling off in diverging lines in the gloom of the ocean. The boat of Ludlow had not gone fifty fathoms before he was perfectly conscious of the inutility of a chase; for the obscurity of the night was so great as to render the spars of his own ship nearly indistinct, even at that short distance. After pulling by compass some ten or fifteen minutes, in a direction that carried him to windward of the *Coquette*, the young man commanded the crew to cease rowing, and prepared himself to wait patiently for the result of his undertaking.

There was nothing to vary the monotony of such a scene for an hour, but the regular rolling of a sea that was but little agitated, a few occasional strokes of the oars that were given in order to keep the barge in its place, or the heavy breathing of some smaller fish of the cetaceous kind, as it rose to the surface to inhale the atmosphere. In no quarter of the heavens was anything visible; not even a star was peeping out to cheer the solitude and silence of that solitary place. The men were nodding on the thwarts, and our young sailor was about to relinquish his design as fruitless, when suddenly a noise was heard at no great distance from the spot where they lay. It was one of those sounds which would have been inexplicable to any but a seaman, but which conveyed

a meaning to the ears of Ludlow, as plain as that which could be imparted by speech to a landsman. A moaning creak was followed by the low rumbling of a rope, as it rubbed on some hard or distended substance; then succeeded the heavy flap of canvas, that, yielding first to a powerful impulse, was suddenly checked.

"Hear ye that?" exclaimed Ludlow, a little above a whisper. "'Tis the brigantine jibbing his main-boom! Give way, men—see all ready to lay him aboard!"

The crew started from their slumbers; the plash of oars was heard, and in the succeeding moment the sails of a vessel gliding through the obscurity, nearly across their course, were visible.

"Now spring to your oars, men!" continued Ludlow, with the eagerness of one engaged in chase. "We have him to advantage and he is ours!—a long pull and a strong pull—steadily, boys, and together!"

The practiced crew did their duty. It seemed but a moment before they were close upon the chase.

"Another stroke of the oars and she is ours!" cried Ludlow. "Grapple!—to your arms!—away, boarders, away!"

These orders came on the ears of the men with the effect of martial blasts. The crew shouted, the clashing of arms was heard, and the tramp of feet upon the deck of the vessel announced the success of the enterprise. A minute of extreme activity and of noisy confusion followed. The cheers of the boarders had been heard at a distance; and rockets shot into the air from the other boats, whose crews answered the shouts with manful lungs. The whole ocean appeared in a momentary glow, and the roar of a gun from the *Coquette* added to the fracas. The ship set several lanterns, in order to indicate her position; while blue-lights and other marine signals were constantly burning in the approaching boats, as if those who guided them were anxious to intimidate the assailed by a show of numbers.

In the midst of this scene of sudden awakening from the most profound quiet, Ludlow began to look about him in order to secure the principal objects of the capture. He had repeated his orders about entering the cabins, and concerning the person of the Skimmer of the Seas, among the other instructions given to the crews of the different boats; and the instant they found themselves in quiet possession of the prize, the young man dashed into the private recesses of the vessel, with a heart that throbbed even more violently than during the ardor of boarding. To cast open the door of a cabin beneath the high quarter-deck, and to descend to the level of its floor, were the acts of a moment. But disappointment and mortification succeeded to triumph. A second glance was not necessary to show that the coarse work and foul smells he saw and encountered did not belong to the commodious and even elegant accommodations of the brigantine.

"Here is no *Water-Witch!*" he exclaimed aloud, under the impulse of sudden surprise.

"God be praised!" returned a voice, which was succeeded by a frightened face from a stateroom. "We were told the Rover was in the offing, and thought the yells could come from nothing human!"

The blood which had been rushing through the arteries and veins of Ludlow so tumultuously, now crept into his cheeks, and was felt tingling at his fingers' ends. He gave a hurried order to his men to reenter their boat, leaving everything as they found it. A short conference between the commander of her Majesty's ship *Coquette* and the seaman of the stateroom succeeded; then the former hastened on deck, whence his passage into the barge occupied but a moment. The boat pulled away from the fancied prize amid a silence that was uninterrupted by any other sound than that of a song, which, to all appearance, came from one who by this time had placed himself at the vessel's helm. All that can be said of the music is that it was suited to the words, and all that could be heard of the latter was a portion of a verse, if verse it might be called, which had exercised the talents of some thoroughly nautical mind. As we depend for the accuracy of the quotation altogether on the fidelity of the journal of the midship-

man already named, it is possible that some injustice may be done the writer; but, according to that document, he sang a strain of the coasting song which we have prefixed to this chapter as its motto.

The papers of the coaster did not give a more detailed description of her character and pursuits than that which is contained in this verse. It is certain that the log-book of the *Coquette* was far less explicit. The latter merely said that "A coaster called the *Stately Pine*, John Turner, master, bound from New York to the Province of North Carolina, was boarded at one o'clock in the morning; all well." But this description was not of a nature to satisfy the seamen of the cruiser. Those who had been actually engaged in the expedition were much too excited to see things in their true colors; and coupled with the two previous escapes of the *Water-Witch*, the event just related had no small share in confirming their former opinions concerning her character. The sailing-master was not now alone in believing that all pursuit of the brigantine was useless.

But these were conclusions that the people of the *Coquette* made at their leisure, rather than those which suggested themselves on the instant. The boats, led by the flashes of light, had joined each other, and were rowing fast toward the ship before the pulses of the actors beat with sufficient calmness to admit of reflection; nor was it until the adventurers were below, and in their hammocks, that they found suitable occasion to relate what had occurred to a wondering auditory. Robert Yarn, the fore-topman who had felt the locks of the sea-green lady blowing in his face during the squall, took advantage of the circumstance to dilate on his experiences; and after having advanced certain positions that particularly favored his own theories, he produced one of the crew of the barge who stood ready to affirm, in any court in Christendom, that he actually saw the process of changing the beautiful and graceful lines that distinguished the hull of the smuggler into the coarser and more clumsy model of the coaster.

"There are know-nothings," continued Robert, after he had fortified his position by the testimony in question, "who would deny that the water of the ocean is blue, because the stream that turns the parish mill happens to be muddy. But your real mariner, who has lived much in foreign parts, is a man who understands the philosophy of life, and knows when to believe a truth and when to scorn a lie. As for a vessel changing her character when hard pushed in a chase, there are many instances; though, having one so near us, there is less necessity to be roving over distant seas in search of a case to prove it. My own opinion concerning this here brigantine is much as follows: that is to say, I do suppose there was once a real living hermaphrodite of her build and rig; and that she might be employed in some such trade as this craft is thought to be in; and that, in some unlucky hour, she and her people met with a mishap that has condemned her ever since to appear on this coast at stated times. She has, however, a natural dislike to a royal cruiser; and, no doubt, the thing is now sailed by those who have little need of compass or observation. All this being true, it is not wonderful that when the boat's crew got on her decks they found her different from what they expected. This much is certain, that when I lay within a boat-hook's length of her sprit-sail-yardarm, she was a half-rig, with a woman figure-head, and as pretty in show of gear aloft as eye ever looked upon; while everything below was as snug as a tobacco-box with the lid down; and here you all say that she is a high-decked schooner, with nothing ship-shape about her! What more is wanting to prove the truth of what has been stated?—if any man can gainsay it, let him speak."

As no man did gainsay it, it is presumed that the reasoning of the topman gained many proselytes. It is scarcely necessary to add how much of mystery and fearful interest was thrown around the redoubted Skimmer of the Seas by the whole transaction.

There was a different feeling on the quarter-deck. The two lieutenants put

their heads together and looked grave; while one or two of the midshipmen, who had been in the boats, were observed to whisper with their messmates, and to indulge in smothered laughter. As the Captain, however, maintained his ordinary dignified and authoritative mien, the merriment went no farther, and was soon repressed.

While on this subject it may be proper to add that, in course of time, the *Stately Pine* reached the capes of North Carolina in safety; and that, having effected her passage over Edenton bar without striking, she ascended the river to the point of her destination. Here the crew soon began to throw out hints relative to an encounter of their schooner with a French cruiser. As the British Empire, even its most remote corner, was at all times alive to its nautical glory, the event soon became the discourse in more distant parts of the colony; and in less than six months the London journals contained a very glowing account of an engagement, in which the names of the *Stately Pine*, and of John Turner, made some respectable advance toward immortality.

If Captain Ludlow ever gave any farther account of the transaction than what was stated in the log-book of his ship, the bienseance observed by the Lords of the Admiralty prevented it from becoming public.

Returning from this digression, which has no other connection with the immediate thread of the narrative than that which arises from a reflected interest, we shall revert to the farther proceedings on board the cruiser.

When the *Coquette* hoisted in her boats, that portion of the crew which did not belong to the watch was dismissed to their hammocks, the lights were lowered, and tranquillity once more reigned in the ship. Ludlow sought his rest, and although there is reason to think that his slumbers were a little disturbed by dreams, he remained tolerably quiet in the hammock-cloths, the place in which it has already been said he saw fit to take his repose, until the morning watch was called.

Although the utmost vigilance was observed among the officers and lookouts, during the rest of the night, there occurred nothing to arouse the crew from their usual recumbent attitudes between the guns. The wind continued light but steady, the sea smooth, and the heavens clouded, as during the first hours of darkness.

CHAPTER XX.

"The mouse ne'er shunned the cat, as they did budge
From rascals worse than they."—CORIOLANUS.

DAY dawned on the Atlantic with its pearly light, succeeded by the usual flushing of the skies, and the stately rising of the sun from out the water. The instant the vigilant officer who commanded the morning watch caught the first glimpses of the returning brightness, Ludlow was awakened. A finger laid on his arm was sufficient to arouse one who slept with the responsibility of his station ever present to his mind. A minute did not pass before the young man was on the quarter-deck, closely examining the heavens and the horizon. His first question was to ask if nothing had been seen during the watch. The answer was in the negative.

"I like this opening in the northwest," observed the Captain, after his eye had thoroughly scanned the whole of the still dusky and limited view. "Wind will come out of it. Give us a capful, and we shall try the speed of this boasted *Water-Witch!* Do I not see a sail on our weather-beam?—or is it the crest of a wave?"

"The sea is getting irregular, and I have often been thus deceived, since the light appeared."

"Get more sail on the ship. Here is wind in-shore of us; we will be ready for it. See everything clear to show all our canvas."

The lieutenant received these orders with the customary deference, and communicated them to his inferiors again, with a promptitude that distinguishes sea discipline. The *Coquette*, at the moment, was lying under her three topsails, one of which was thrown against the mast, in a

manner to hold the vessel as nearly stationary as the drift and the wash of the waves would allow. So soon, however, as the officer of the watch summoned the people to exertion, the massive yards were swung; several light sails that served to balance the fabric as well as to urge it ahead, were hoisted or opened; and the ship immediately began to move through the water. While the men of the watch were thus employed, the flapping of the canvas announced the near approach of a new breeze.

The coast of North America is liable to sudden and dangerous transitions in the currents of the air. It is a circumstance of no unusual occurrence for a gale to alter its direction with so little warning as greatly to jeopard the safety of a ship, or even to overwhelm her. It has been often said that the celebrated *Ville de Paris* was lost through one of these violent changes, her captain having inadvertently hove-to the vessel under too much after-sail, a mistake by which he lost command of his ship during the pressing emergency that ensued. Whatever may have been the fact as regards that ill-fated prize, it was certain that Ludlow was perfectly aware of the hazards that sometimes accompany the first blasts of a northwest wind on his native coast, and that he never forgot to be prepared for the danger.

When the wind from the land struck the *Coquette*, the streak of light, which announced the appearance of the sun, had been visible for several minutes. As the broad sheets of vapor, that had veiled the heavens during the prevalence of the southeasterly breeze, were rolled up into dense masses of clouds, like some immense curtain that is withdrawn from before its scene, the water, no less than the sky, became instantly visible in every quarter. It is scarcely necessary to say, how eagerly the gaze of our young seaman ran over the horizon, in order to observe the objects which might come within its range. At first, disappointment was plainly painted in his countenance; then succeeded the animated eye and flushed cheek of success.

"I had thought her gone!" he said to his immediate subordinate in authority. "But here she is, to leeward, just within the edge of that driving mist, and as dead under our lee as a kind fortune can place her. Keep the ship away, sir, and cover her with canvas, from her trucks down. Call the people from their hammocks, and show yon insolent what her Majesty's sloop can do at need!"

This command was the commencement of a general and hasty movement, in which every seaman in the ship exerted his powers to the utmost. All hands were no sooner called than the depths of the vessel gave up their tenants, who, joining their force to that of the watch on deck, quickly covered the spars of the *Coquette* with a snow-white cloud. Not content to catch the breeze on such surfaces as the ordinary yards could distend, long booms were thrust out over the water, and sail was set beyond sail, until the bending masts would bear no more. The low hull which supported this towering and complicated mass of ropes, spars, and sails, yielded to the powerful impulse, and the fabric, which, in addition to its crowd of human beings, sustained so heavy a load of artillery, with all its burden of stores and ammunition, began to divide the waves with the steady and imposing force of a vast momentum. The seas curled and broke against her sides, like water washing the rocks, the steady ship feeling, as yet, no impression from their feeble efforts. As the wind increased, however, and the vessel went farther from the land, the surface of the ocean gradually grew more agitated, until the highlands, which lay over the villa of the Lust in Rust, finally sank into the sea, when the topgallant royals of the ship were seen describing wide segments of circles against the heavens, and her dark sides occasionally rose, from a long and deep roll, glittering with the element that sustained her.

When Ludlow first descried the object which he believed to be the chase, it seemed a motionless speck on the margin of the sea. It had now grown into the magnitude and symmetry of the well-

known brigantine. Her slight and atten uated spars were plainly to be seen, rolling easily but wide with the constant movement of the hull, and with no sail spread but that which was necessary to keep the vessel in command on the billows. When the *Coquette* was just within the range of a cannon, the canvas began to unfold; and it was soon apparent that the Skimmer of the Seas was preparing to fight.

The first maneuver of the *Water-Witch* was an attempt to gain the wind on her pursuer. A short experiment appeared to satisfy those who governed the brigantine that the effort was vain while the wind was so fresh and the water so rough. She wore, and crowded sail on the opposite tack, in order to try her speed with the cruiser; nor was it until the result sufficiently showed the danger of permitting the other to get any nigher that she finally put her helm a-weather, and ran off, like a sea-fowl resting on its wing, with the wind over her taffrail.

The two vessels now presented the spectacle of a stern chase. The brigantine also opened the folds of all her sails, and there arose a pyramid of canvas over the nearly imperceptible hull, that resembled a fantastic cloud driving above the sea, with a velocity that seemed to rival the passage of the vapor that floated in the upper air. As equal skill directed the movements of the two vessels, and the same breeze pressed upon their sails, it was long before there was any perceptible difference in their progress. Hour passed after hour, and were it not for the sheets of white foam that was dashed from the bows of the *Coquette*, and the manner in which she even out-stripped the caps of the combing waves, her commander might have fancied his vessel ever in the same spot. While the ocean presented, on every side, the same monotonous and rolling picture, there lay the chase, seemingly neither a foot nearer nor a foot farther than when the trial of speed began. A dark line would rise on the crest of a wave, and then, sinking again, leave nothing visible but the yielding and waving cloud of canvas that danced along the sea.

"I had hoped for better things of the ship, Master Trysail!" said Ludlow, who had long been seated on a knighthead, attentively watching the progress of the chase. "We are buried to the bob-stays; yet, there yon fellow lies, nothing plainer than when he first showed his studding-sails!"

"And there he will lie, Captain Ludlow, while the light lasts. I have chased the rover in the narrow seas, till the cliffs of England melted away like the cap of a wave, and we had raised the sand banks of Holland as high as the sprit-sailyard; yet what good came of it! The rogue played with us, as your sportsman trifles with the entangled trout; and when we thought we had him he would shoot without the range of our guns, with as little exertion as a ship slides into the water after the spur shoars are knocked from under her bows."

"Aye, but the *Druid* had a little of the rust of antiquity about her. The *Coquette* has never got a chase under her lee that she did not speak."

"I disparage no ship, sir, for character is character and none should speak lightly of their fellow-creatures, and least of all, of anything that follows the sea. I allow the *Coquette* to be a lively boat on a wind, and a real scudder going large; but one should know the wright that fashioned yonder brigantine before he ventured to say that any vessel in her Majesty's fleet can hold way with her, when she is driven hard."

"These opinions, Trysail, are fitter for the tales of a top than for the mouth of one who walks the quarter-deck."

"I should have lived to little purpose, Captain Ludlow, not to know that what was philosophy in my younger days is not philosophy now. They say the earth is round, which is my own opinion—first, because the glorious Sir Francis Drake, and divers other Englishmen, have gone in, as it were, at one end and out at the other; no less than several seamen of other nations, to say nothing of one Magellan, who pretends to have been the first man to make the passage, which I take to be nothing more nor less than a Portugee lie, it being

altogether unreasonable to suppose that a Portugee should do what an Englishman had not yet thought of doing; secondly, if the world were not round, or some such shape, why should we see the small sails of a ship before her courses, or why should her truck heave up into the horizon before the hull? They say, moreover, that the world turns round, which is no doubt true; and it is just as true that its opinions turn round with it, which brings me to the object of my remark—yon fellow shows more of his broadside, sir, than common! He is edging in for the land, which must lie here-away on our larboard beam, in order to get into smoother water. This tumbling about is not favorable to your light craft, let who will build them."

"I had hoped to drive him off the coast. Could we get him fairly into the Gulf Stream, he would be ours, for he is too low in the water to escape us in the short seas. We must force him into blue water, though our upper spars crack in the struggle! Go aft, Mr. Hopper, and tell the officer of the watch to bring the ship's head up, a point and a half, to the northward, and to give a slight pull on the braces."

"What a mainsail the rogue carries! it is as broad as the instructions of a roving commission, with a hoist like the promotion of an admiral's son! How everything pulls aboard him! A thoroughbred sails that brigantine, let him come whence he may!"

"I think we near him! The rough water is helping us, and we are closing. Steer small, fellow; steer small! You see the color of his moldings begins to show, when he lifts on the seas."

"The sun touches his side—yet, Captain Ludlow, you may be right—for here is a man in his foretop, plainly enough to be seen. A shot or two, among his spars and sails, might now do service."

Ludlow affected not to hear; but the first lieutenant having come on the forecastle, seconded this opinion by remarking that their position would indeed enable them to use the chase-gun, without losing any distance. As Trysail sustained his former assertion by truths that were too obvious to be refuted, the commander of the cruiser reluctantly issued an order to clear away the forward gun, and to shift it into the bridle-port. The interested and attentive seamen were not long in performing this service; and a report was quickly made to the Captain that the piece was ready.

Ludlow then descended from his post on the knighthead, and pointed the cannon himself.

"Knock away the quoin entirely," he said to the captain of the gun, when he had got the range; "now mind her when she lifts forward; keep the ship steady, sir—fire!"

Those gentlemen "who live at home at ease," are often surprised to read of combats in which so much powder, and hundreds and even thousands of shot are expended, with so little loss of human life; while a struggle on the land of less duration, and seemingly of less obstinacy, shall sweep away a multitude. The secret of the difference lies in the uncertainty of aim on an element as restless as the sea. The largest ship is rarely quite motionless, when on the open ocean; and it is not necessary to tell the reader that the smallest variation in the direction of a gun at its muzzle becomes magnified to many yards at the distance of a few hundred feet. Marine gunnery has no little resemblance to the skill of the fowler; since a calculation for a change in the position of the object must commonly be made in both cases, with the additional embarrassment on the part of the seaman of an allowance for a complicated movement in the piece itself.

How far the gun of the *Coquette* was subject to the influence of these causes, or how far the desire of her captain to protect those whom he believed to be on board the brigantine had an effect on the direction taken by its shot, will probably never be known. It is certain, however, that when the stream of fire, followed by its curling cloud, had flashed out upon the water, fifty eyes sought in vain to trace the course of the iron messenger among the sails and riggings of the *Water-Witch*.

The symmetry of her beautiful rig was undisturbed, and the unconscious fabric still glided over the waves with its customary ease and velocity. Ludlow had a reputation among his crew for some skill in the direction of a gun. The failure, therefore, in no degree aided in changing the opinions of the common men concerning the character of the chase. Many shook their heads, and more than one veteran tar, as he paced his narrow limits with both hands thrust into the bosom of his jacket, was heard to utter his belief of the inefficacy of ordinary shot in bringing to that brigantine. It was necessary, however, to repeat the experiment for the sake of appearances. The gun was several times discharged, and always with the same want of success.

"There is little use in wasting our powder, at this distance, and with so heavy a sea," said Ludlow, quitting the cannon, after a fifth and fruitless essay. "I shall fire no more. Look at your sails, gentlemen, and see that everything draws. We must conquer with our heels and let the artillery rest. Secure the gun."

"The piece is ready, sir," observed its captain, presuming on his known favor with the commander, though he qualified the boldness by taking off his hat, in a sufficiently respectful manner; "'tis a pity to balk it!"

"Fire it yourself, then, and return the piece to its port," carelessly returned the Captain, willing to show that others could be as unlucky as himself.

The men quartered at the gun, left alone, busied themselves in executing the order.

"Run in the quoin, and, blast the brig, give her a point blanker!" said the bluff old seaman who was intrusted with a local authority over that particular piece. "None of your geometry calculations for me!"

The crew obeyed, and the match was instantly applied. A rising sea, however, aided the object of the directly-minded old tar, or our narration of the exploits of the piece would end with the discharge, since its shot would otherwise have inevitably plunged into a wave within a few yards of its muzzle. The bows of the ship rose with the appearance of the smoke, the usual brief expectation followed, then fragments of wood were seen flying above the topmast-studding-sail-boom of the brigantine, which, at the same time, flew forward, carrying with it, and entirely deranging the two important sails that depended on the spar for support.

"So much for plain sailing!" cried the delighted old tar, slapping the breech of the gun affectionately. Witch or no witch, there go two of her jackets at once; and by the Captain's good will, we shall shortly take off some more of her clothes! In sponge——"

"The order is to run the gun aft, and secure it," said a merry midshipman, leaping on the heel of the bowsprit to gaze at the confusion on board the chase. "The rogue is nimble enough in saving his canvas!"

There was, in truth, necessity for exertion on the part of those who governed the movements of the brigantine. The two sails that were rendered temporarily useless were of great importance, with the wind over the taffrail. The distance between the two vessels did not exceed a mile, and the danger of lessening it was too obvious to admit of delay. The ordinary movements of seamen in critical moments are dictated by a quality that resembles instinct more than thought. The constant hazards of a dangerous and delicate profession, in which delay may prove fatal, and in which life, character and property are so often dependent on the self-possession and resources of him who commands, beget in time so keen a knowledge of the necessary expedients as to cause it to approach a natural quality.

The studding-sails of the *Water-Witch* were no sooner fluttering in the air, than the brigantine slightly changed her course, like some bird whose wing had been touched by the fowler; and her head was seen inclining as much to the south as a moment before it had pointed northward. The variation, trifling as it was, brought the wind on the opposite quarter, and caused the boom that distended her mainsail to jibe. At the same instant, the

studding-sails, which had been flapping under the lee of this vast sheet of canvas, swelled to their utmost tension; and the vessel lost little, if any, of the power which urged her through the water. Even while this evolution was so rapidly performed, men were seen aloft, nimbly employed, as it has been already expressed by the observant little midshipman, in securing the crippled sails.

"The rogue has a quick wit," said Trysail, whose critical eye suffered no movement of the chase to escape him; "and he has need of it, sail from what haven he may! Yon brigantine is prettily handled! Little have we gained by our fire but the gunner's account of ammunition expended; and little has the freetrader lost but a studding-sail-boom, which will work up very well yet into topgallant yards, and other light spars, for such a cockle-shell."

"It is something gained to force him off the land into rougher water," Ludlow mildly answered. "I think we see his quarter-pieces more plainly than before the gun was used."

"No doubt, sir, no doubt. I got a glimpse of his lower dead-eyes a minute ago; but I have not been near enough to see the saucy look of the hussy under his bowsprit; yet there goes the brigantine, at large!"

"I am certain that we are closing," thoughtfully returned Ludlow. "Hand me the glass, quartermaster."

Trysail watched the countenance of his young commander as he examined the chase with the aid of the instrument; and he thought he read strong discontent in his features when the other laid it aside.

"Does he show no signs of coming back to his allegiance, sir, or does the rogue hold out in obstinacy?"

"The figure on his poop is the bold man who ventured on board the *Coquette*, and who now seems quite as much at his ease as when he exhibited his effrontery here!"

"There is a look of deep water about that rogue; and I thought that her Majesty had gained a prize when he first put foot on our decks. You are right enough, in calling him a bold one! The fellow's impudence would unsettle the discipline of a whole ship's company, though every other man were an officer, and all the rest priests. He took up as much room in walking the quarter-deck as a ninety in wearing; and the truck is not driven on the head of that topgallant-mast half as hard as the hat is riveted to his head. The fellow has no reverence for a pennant! I managed, in shifting pennants at sunset, to make the fly of the one that came down flap in his impudent countenance, by way of a hint; and he took it as a Dutchman takes a signal—that is, as a question to be answered in the next watch. A little polish got on the quarter-deck of a man-of-war would make a philosopher of the rogue, and fit him for any company short of heaven!"

"There goes a new boom aloft!" cried Ludlow, interrupting the discursive discourse of the master. "He is bent on getting in with the shore."

"If these puffs come much heavier," returned the master, whose opinions of the chase vacillated with his professional feelings, "we shall have him at our own play, and try the qualities of his brigantine. The sea has a green spot to windward, and there are strong symptoms of a squall on the water. One can almost see into the upper world, with an air clear as this. Your northers sweep the mists off America, and leave both sea and land bright as a school-boy's face, before the tears have dimmed it, after the first flogging. You have sailed in the southern seas, Captain Ludlow, I know; for we were shipmates among the islands, years that are passed; but I never heard whether you have run the Gibraltar passage, and seen the blue water that lies among the Italy mountains?"

"I made a cruise against the Barbary states when a lad; and we had business that took us to the northern shore."

"Aye! 'Tis your northern shore I mean! There is not a foot of it all, from the rock at the entrance to the Faro of Messina, that eye of mine hath not seen. No want of lookouts and landmarks in that quarter! Here we are close aboard of America, which lies some eight or ten

leagues there-away to the northward of us, and some forty astern; and yet, if it were not for our departure, with the color of the water, and a knowledge of the soundings, one might believe himself in the middle of the Atlantic. Many a good ship plumps upon America before she knows where she is going; while in yon sea you may run for a mountain, with its side in full view, four-and-twenty hours on a stretch, before you see the town at its foot."

"Nature has compensated for the difference, in defending the approach to this coast by the Gulf Stream, with its floating weeds and different temperature; while the lead may feel its way in the darkest night, for no roof of a house is more gradual than the ascent of this shore, from a hundred fathoms to a sandy beach."

"I said many a good ship, Captain Ludlow, and not good navigator. No, no, your thoroughbred knows the difference between green water and the blue, as well as between a hand-lead and the deep sea. But I remember to have missed an observation, once, when running for Genoa, before a mistral. There was a likelihood of making our landfall in the night, and the greater the need of knowing the ship's position. I have often thought, sir, that the ocean was like human life—a blind track for all that is ahead, and none of the clearest as respects that which has been passed over. Many a man runs headlong to his own destruction, and many a ship steers for a reef under a press of canvas. To-morrow is a fog, into which none of us can see; and even the present time is little better than thick weather, into which we look without getting much information. Well, as I was observing, here lay our course, with the wind as near aft as need be, blowing much as at present; for your French mistral has a family likeness to the American norther. We had the maintopgallant-sail set, without studding-sails, for we began to think of the deep bight in which Genoa is stowed, and the sun had dipped more than an hour. As our good fortune would have it, clouds and mistrals do not agree long, and we got a clear horizon. Here lay a mountain of snow, northerly, a little west, and there lay another, southerly with easting. The best ship in Queen Anne's navy could not have fetched either in a day's run, yet there we saw them, as plainly as if anchored under their lee! A look at the chart soon gave us an insight into our situation. The first were the Alps, as they call them, being as I suppose the French for apes, of which there are no doubt plenty in those regions; and the other were the highlands of Corsica, both being as white, in midsummer, as the hair of a man of four-score. You see, sir, we had only to set the two, by compass, to know, within a league or two, where we were. So we ran till midnight, and hove-to; in the morning we took the light to feel for our haven——"

"The brigantine is jibbing again!" cried Ludlow. "He is determined to shoal his water!"

The master glanced an eye around the horizon, and then pointed steadily toward the north. Ludlow observed the gesture, and, turning his head, he was at no loss to read its meaning.

CHAPTER XXI.

"I am gone, sir,
And anon, sir,
I'll be with you again."
—TWELFTH NIGHT.

ALTHOUGH it is contrary to the apparent evidence of our senses, there is no truth more certain than that the course of most gales of wind comes from the leeward. The effects of a tempest shall be felt for hours, at a point that is seemingly near its termination, before they are witnessed at another that appears to be nearer its source. Experience has also shown that a storm is more destructive at or near its actual place of commencement than at that whence it may seem to come. The easterly gales that so often visit the coast of the republic commit their ravages in the bays of Pennsylvania and Virginia, or along the sounds of the Carolinas, hours

before their existence is known in the States farther east; and the same wind which is a tempest at Hatteras becomes softened to a breeze near the Penobscot. There is, however, little mystery in this apparent phenomenon. The vacuum which has been created in the air, and which is the origin of all winds, must be filled first from the nearest stores of the atmosphere; and as each region contributes to produce the equilibrium, it must, in return, receive other supplies from those which lie beyond. Were a given quantity of water to be suddenly abstracted from the sea, the empty place would be replenished by a torrent from the nearest surrounding fluid, whose level would be restored in succession by supplies that were less and less violently contributed. Were the abstraction made on a shoal, or near the land, the flow would be the greatest from that quarter where the fluid had the greatest force, and with it would consequently come the current.

But while there is so close an affinity between the two fluids, the workings of the viewless winds are, in their nature, much less subject to the powers of human comprehension than those of the sister element. The latter are frequently subject to the direct and manifest influence of the former, while the effects produced by the ocean on the air are hid from our knowledge by the subtle character of the agency. Vague and erratic currents, it is true, are met in the waters of the ocean; but their origin is easily referred to the action of the winds, while we often remain in uncertainty as to the immediate causes which give birth to the breezes themselves. Thus the mariner, even while the victim of the irresistible waves, studies the heavens as the known source from whence the danger comes; and while he struggles fearfully, amid the strife of the elements, to preserve the balance of the delicate and fearful machine he governs, he well knows that the one which presents the most visible, and to a landsman much the most formidable object of apprehension, is but the instrument of the unseen and powerful agent that heaps the water on his path.

It is in consequence of this difference in power, and of the mystery that envelops the workings of the atmosphere, that, in all ages, seamen have been the subjects of superstition in respect to the winds. There is more or less of the dependency of ignorance in the manner with which they have regarded the changes of that fickle element. Even the mariners of our own times are not exempt from this weakness. The thoughtless ship-boy is reproved if his whistle be heard in the howling of the gale; and the officer sometimes betrays a feeling of uneasiness, if at such a moment he should witness any violation of the received opinions of his profession. He finds himself in the situation of one whose ears have drunk in legends of supernatural appearances, which a better instruction has taught him to condemn; and who, when placed in situations to awaken their recollection, finds the necessity of drawing upon his reason to quiet emotions that he might hesitate to acknowledge.

When Trysail directed the attention of his young commander to the heavens, however, it was more with the intelligence of an experienced mariner than with any of the sensations to which allusion has just been made. A cloud had suddenly appeared on the water, and long, ragged portions of the vapor were pointing from it, in a manner to give it what seamen term a windy appearance.

"We shall have more than we want with this canvas!" said the master, after both he and his commander had studied the appearance of the mist for a sufficient time. "That fellow is a mortal enemy of lofty sails; he likes to see nothing but naked sticks up in his neighborhood!"

"I think his appearance will force the brigantine to shorten sail," returned the Captain. "We will hold on to the last, while he must begin to take in soon, or the squall will come upon him too fast for a light-handed vessel."

"'Tis a cruiser's advantage! yet the rogue shows no signs of lowering a single cloth!"

"We will look to our own spars," said Ludlow, turning to the lieutenant of the

watch. "Call the people up, sir, and see all ready for yonder cloud."

The order was succeeded by the customary hoarse summons of the boatswain, who prefaced the effort of his lungs by a long, shrill winding of his call, above the hatchways of the ship. The cry of "All hands shorten sail, ahoy!" soon brought the crew from the depths of the vessel to her upper deck. Each trained seaman silently took his station; and after the ropes were cleared, and the few necessary preparations made, all stood in attentive silence, awaiting the sounds that might next proceed from the trumpet, which the first lieutenant had now assumed in person.

The superiority of sailing, which a ship fitted for war possesses over one employed in commerce, proceeds from a variety of causes. The first is in the construction of the hull, which in the one is as justly fitted as the art of naval architecture will allow to the double purposes of speed and buoyancy; while, in the other, the desire of gain induces great sacrifices of these important objects in order that the vessel may be burdensome. Next comes the difference in the rig, which is not only more square, but more lofty in a ship of war than in a trader; because the greater force of the crew of the former enables them to manage both spars and sails that are far heavier than any ever used in the latter.

Then comes the greater ability of the cruiser to make and shorten sail, since a ship manned by one or two hundred men may safely profit by the breeze to the last moment, while one manned by a dozen often loses hours of a favorable wind, from the weakness of her crew. This explanation will enable the otherwise uninitiated reader to understand why Ludlow had hoped the coming squall would aid his designs on the chase.

To express ourselves in nautical language, "The *Coquette* held on to the last." Ragged streaks of vapor were whirling about in the air, within a fearful proximity to the lofty and light sails, and the foam on the water had got so near the ship as already to efface her wake; when Ludlow, who had watched the progress of the cloud with singular coolness, made a sign to his subordinate that the proper instant had arrived.

"In, of all!" shouted through the trumpet, was all that was necessary; for officers and crew were well instructed in their duty.

The words had no sooner quitted the lips of the lieutenant, than the steady roar of the sea was drowned in the flapping of the canvas. Tacks, sheets, and halyards went together, and in less than a minute the cruiser showed naked spars and whistling ropes, where so lately had been seen a cloud of snow-white cloth. All her steering-sails came in together, and the lofty canvas was furled to her topsails. The latter stood, and the vessel received the weight of the little tempest on their broad surfaces. The gallant ship stood the shock nobly; but, as the wind came over the taffrail, its force had far less influence on the hull than on the other occasion already described. The danger, now, was for her spars; and these were saved by the watchful, though bold vigilance of her captain.

Ludlow was no sooner certain that the cruiser felt the force of the wind, and to gain this assurance needed but a few moments, than he turned his eager look on the brigantine. To the surprise of all who witnessed her temerity, the *Water-Witch* showed all her light sails. Swiftly as the ship was now driven through the water, its velocity was greatly outstripped by the wind. The signs of the passing squall were already visible on the sea for half the distance between the two vessels; and still the chase showed no consciousness of its approach. Her commander had evidently studied its effects on the *Coquette*, and he waited the shock with the coolness of one accustomed to depend on his own resources, and able to estimate the force with which he had to contend.

"If he hold on a minute longer he will get more than he can bear, and away will go all his kites like smoke from the muzzle of a gun!" muttered Trysail. "Ah! there come down his studding-sails—ha! settle away the mainsail—in royal and topgallant sail with topsail on the cap!

The rascals are nimble as pickpockets in a crowd!"

The honest master has sufficiently described the precautions taken on board of the brigantine. Nothing was furled; but as everything was hauled up or lowered, the squall had little to waste its fury on. The diminished surface of the sails protected the spars, while the canvas was saved by the aid of cordage. After a few moments of pause, half a dozen men were seen busied in more effectually securing the few upper and lighter sails.

But though the boldness with which the Skimmer of the Seas carried sail to the last was justified by the result, still the effects of the increased wind and rising waves on the progress of the two vessels became more sensible. While the little and low brigantine began to labor and roll the *Coquette* rode the element with buoyancy, and consequently with less resistance from the water. Twenty minutes, during which the force of the wind was but little lessened, brought the cruiser so near the chase as to enable her crew to distinguish most of the smaller objects that were visible above her ridge-poles.

"Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!" said Ludlow, in an undertone, the excitement of the chase growing with the hopes of success. "I ask but one half hour, then shift at your pleasure!"

"Blow, good devil, and you shall have the cook!" muttered Trysail, quoting a very different author. "Another glass will bring us within hale."

"The squall is leaving us!" interrupted the Captain. "Pack on the ship again, Mr. Luff, from her trucks to her ridge-ropes!"

The whistle of the boatswain was again heard at the hatchways, and the hoarse summons of "All hands make sail, ahoy!" once more called the people to their stations. The sails were set with a rapidity which nearly equaled the speed with which they had been taken in, and the violence of the breeze was scarcely off the ship before its complicated volumes of canvas were spread to catch what remained. On the other hand, the chase, even more hardy than the cruiser, did not wait for the end of the squall; but, profiting by the notice given by the latter, the Skimmer of the Seas began to sway his yards aloft while the sea was still white with foam.

"The quick-sighted rogue knows we are done with it," said Trysail; "and he is getting ready for his own turn. We gain but little of him, notwithstanding our muster of hands."

The fact was too true to be denied, for the brigantine was again under all her canvas, before the ship had sensibly profited by her superior physical force. It was at this moment, when, perhaps in consequence of the swell on the water, the *Coquette* might have possessed some small advantage, that the wind suddenly failed. The squall had been its expiring effort; and, within an hour after the two vessels had again made sail, the canvas was flapping against the masts in a manner to throw back, in eddies, a force as great as that which it received. The sea fell fast, and near the end of the last, or forenoon watch, the surface of the ocean was agitated only by those long, undulating swells that seldom leave it entirely without motion. For some little time there were fickle currents of air playing in various directions about the ship, but always in sufficient force to urge her slowly through the water; and then, when the equilibrium of the element seemed established, there was a total calm. During the half-hour of the baffling winds, the brigantine had been a gainer, though not enough to carry her entirely beyond the reach of the cruiser's guns.

"Haul up the courses!" said Ludlow, when the last breath of wind had been felt on the ship, and quitting the gun where he had long stood, watching the movements of the chase. "Get the boats into the water, Mr. Luff, and arm their crews."

The young commander issued this order, which needed no interpreter to explain its object, firmly, but in sadness. His face was thoughtful, and his whole air was that of a man who yielded to an imperative but an unpleasant duty. When he had spoken he signed to the attentive

Alderman and his friend to follow, and entered his cabin.

"There is no alternative," continued Ludlow, as he laid the glass, which so often that morning had been at his eye, on the table, and threw himself into a chair. "This rover must be seized at every hazard, and here is a favorable occasion to carry him by boarding. Twenty minutes will bring us to his side, and five more will put us in possession; but——"

"You think the Skimmer is not a man to receive such visitors with an old woman's welcome," pithily observed Myndert.

"I much mistake the man if he yield so beautiful a vessel peacefully. Duty is imperative on a seaman, Alderman Van Beverout; and much as I lament the circumstance, it must be obeyed."

"I understand you, sir. Captain Ludlow has two mistresses, Queen Anne and the daughter of old Etienne Barberie. He fears both. When the debts exceed the means of payment, it would seem wise to offer to compound; and in this case her Majesty and my niece may be said to stand in case of creditors."

"You mistake my meaning, sir," said Ludlow. "There can be no composition between a faithful officer and his duty, nor do I acknowledge more than one mistress in my ship—but seamen are little to be trusted in the moment of success, and with their passions awakened by resistance. Alderman Van Beverout, will you accompany the party, and serve as mediator?"

"Pikes and hand-grenades! Am I a fit subject for mounting the sides of a smuggler with a broadsword between my teeth! If you will put me into the smallest and most peaceable of your boats, with a crew of two boys, that I can control with the authority of a magistrate, and covenant to remain here with your three topsails aback, having always a flag of truce at each mast, I will bear the olive branch to the brigantine, but not a word of menace. If report speak true, your Skimmer of the Seas is no lover of threats, and Heaven forbid that I should do violence to any man's habits! I will go forth as your turtle-dove, Captain Ludlow; but not one foot will I proceed as your Goliath."

"And you equally refuse endeavoring to avert hostilities?" continued Ludlow, turning his look on the Patroon of Kinderhook.

"I am the Queen's subject, and ready to aid in supporting the laws," quietly returned Oloff Van Staats.

"Patroon!" exclaimed his watchful friend, "you know not what you say! If there were question of an inroad of Mohawks, or an invasion from the Canadas, the case would be altered; but this is only a trifling difference concerning a small balance in the revenue duties, which had better be left to your tide-waiter and the other wild-cats of the law. If Parliament will put temptation bfore our eyes, let the sin light on their own heads. Human nature is weak, and the vanities of our system are so many inducements to overlook unreasonable regulations. I say, therefore, that it is better to remain in peace on board this ship, where our character will be as safe as our bones, and trust to Providence for what will happen."

"I am the Queen's subject, ready to uphold her dignity," repeated Oloff, firmly.

"I will trust you, sir," said Ludlow, taking his rival by the arm, and leading him into his own stateroom.

The conference was soon ended, and a midshipman shortly after reported that the boats were ready for service. The master was next summoned to the cabin, and admitted to the private apartment of his commander. Ludlow then proceeded to the deck, where he made the final dispositions for the attack. The ship was left in charge of Mr. Luff, with an injunction to profit by any breeze that might offer, to draw as near as possible to the chase. Trysail was placed in the launch at the head of a strong party of boarders. Van Staats of Kinderhook was provided with the yawl, manned only by its customary crew; while Ludlow entered his own barge, which contained its usual complement, though the arms that lay in the

stern-sheets sufficiently showed that they were prepared for service.

The launch being the soonest ready, and of much the heaviest movement, was the first to quit the side of the *Coquette*. The master steered directly for the becalmed and motionless brigantine. Ludlow took a more circuitous route, apparently with an intention of causing such a diversion as might distract the attention of the crew of the smuggler, and with a view of reaching the point of attack at the same moment with the boat that contained his principal force. The yawl also inclined from the straight line, steering as much on one side as the barge diverged on the other. In this manner the men pulled in silence for some twenty minutes—the motion of the larger boat, which was heavily charged, being slow and difficult. At the end of this period, a signal was made from the barge, when all the men ceased rowing, and prepared themselves for the struggle. The launch was within pistol-shot of the brigantine, and directly on her beam; the yawl had gained her head, where Van Staats of Kinderhook was studying the malign expression of the image with an interest that seemed to increase as his sluggish nature became excited; and Ludlow, on the quarter opposite to the launch, was examining the condition of the chase by the aid of a glass. Trysail profited by the pause to address his followers:

"This is an expedition in boats," commenced the accurate and circumstantial master, "made in smooth water, with little, or one may say no wind, in the month of June, and on the coast of North America. You are not such a set of know-nothings, men, as to suppose the launch has been hoisted out, and two of the oldest, not to say best seamen on the quarter-deck of her Majesty's ship have gone in boats, without the intention of doing something more than to ask the name and character of the brig in sight. The smallest of the young gentlemen might have done that duty as well as the Captain or myself. It is the belief of those who are best informed that the stranger who has the impudence to lie quietly within long range of a royal cruiser, without showing his colors, is neither more nor less than the Skimmer of the Seas, a man against whose seamanship I will say nothing, but who has none of the best reputation for honesty, as respects the Queen's revenue. No doubt you have heard many extraordinary accounts of the exploits of this rover, some of which seem to insinuate that the fellow has a private understanding with those who manage their transactions in a less religious manner than it may be supposed is done by the bench of bishops. But what of that? You are hearty Englishmen, who know what belongs to church and state; and d——e you are not the boys to be frightened by a little witchcraft (cheer).

"Aye, that is intelligible and reasonable language, and such as satisfies me you understand the subject. I shall say no more than just to add, that Captain Ludlow desires there may be no indecent language, nor for that matter any rough treatment of the people of the brigantine, over and above the knocking on the head and cutting of throats that may be necessary to take her. In this particular you will take example by me, who, being older, have more experience than most of you, and who, in all reason, should better know when and where to show his manhood. Lay about you like men so long as the freetraders stand to their quarters—but remember mercy in the hour of victory! You will on no account enter the cabins; on this head my orders are explicit, and I shall make no more of throwing the man into the sea who dares to trangress them than if he were a dead Frenchman; and as we now clearly understand each other, and know our duty so well, there remains no more than to do it. I have said nothing of the prize-money (a cheer), seeing you are men that love the Queen and her honor more than lucre (a cheer); but this much I can safely promise, that there will be the usual division (a cheer), and as there is little doubt but the rogues have driven a profitable trade, why the sum total is likely to be no trifle." (Three hearty cheers.)

The report of a pistol from the barge, which was immediately followed by a gun

from the cruiser, whose shot came whistling between the masts of the *Water-Witch,* was the signal to resort to the ordinary means of victory. The master cheered in his turn; and in a full, steady, and deep voice, he gave the order to "Pull away!" At the same instant, the barge and yawl were seen advancing toward the object of their common attack with a velocity that promised to bring the event to a speedy issue.

Throughout the whole of the preparations in and about the *Coquette,* since the moment when the breeze failed, nothing had been seen of the crew of the brigantine. The beautiful fabric lay rolling on the heaving and setting waters; but no human form appeared to control her movements, or to make the arrangements that seemed so necessary for her defense. The sails continued hanging as they had been left by the breeze, and the hull was floating at the will of the waves. This deep quiet was undisturbed by the approach of the boats; and if the desperate individual who was known to command the free-trader had any intentions of resistance, they had been entirely hid from the long and anxious gaze of Ludlow. Even the shouts, and the dashing of the oars on the water, when the boats commenced their final advance, produced no change on the deck of the chase; though the commander of the *Coquette* saw her head-yards slowly and steadily changing their direction. Uncertain of the object of this movement, he rose on the seat of his boat, and, waving his hat, cheered the men to greater exertion. The barge had got within a hundred feet of the broadside of the brigantine, when the whole of her wide folds of canvas were seen swelling outward. The exquisitely-ordered machinery of spars, sails, and rigging, bowed toward the barge, as in the act of a graceful leave-taking, and the light hull glided ahead, leaving the boat to plow through the empty space which it had just occupied.

There needed no second look to assure Ludlow of the inefficacy of farther pursuit, since the sea was already ruffled by the breeze which had so opportunely come to aid the smuggler. He signed to Trysail to desist; and both stood looking, with disappointed eyes, at the white and bubbling streak which was left by the wake of the fugitive.

But while the *Water-Witch* left the boats, commanded by the Captain and Master of the Queen's cruiser, behind her, she steered directly on the course that was necessary to bring her soonest in contact with the yawl. For a few moments, the crew of the latter believed it was their own advance that brought them so rapidly near their object; and when the midshipman who steered the boat discovered his error, it was only in season to prevent the swift brigantine from passing over his little bark. He gave the yawl a wide sheer, and called to his men to pull for their lives. Oloff Van Staats had placed himself at the head of the boat, armed with a hanger, and with every faculty too intent on the expected attack to heed a danger that was scarcely intelligible to one of his habits. As the brigantine glided past, he saw her low channels bending toward the water, and, with a powerful effort, he leaped into them, shouting a sort of war-cry in Dutch. At the next instant he threw his large frame over the bulwark, and disappeared on the deck of the smuggler.

When Ludlow caused his boats to assemble on the spot which the chase had so lately occupied, he saw that the fruitless expedition had been attended by no other casualty than the involuntary abduction of the Patroon of Kinderhook.

CHAPTER XXII.

"'What country, friends, is this?'
'Illyria, lady.'"—TWELFTH NIGHT.

MEN are as much indebted to a fortuitous concurrence of circumstances, for the characters they sustain in this world, as to their personal qualities. The same truth is applicable to the reputations of ships. The properties of a vessel, like those of an individual, may have their influence on her good or evil fortune; still, something is due to the accidents of life in both. Although the breeze which came

so opportunely to the aid of the *Water-Witch* soon filled the sails of the *Coquette*, it caused no change in the opinions of her crew concerning that ship; while it served to heighten the reputation which the Skimmer of the Seas had already obtained as a mariner who was more than favored by happy chances in the thousand emergencies of his hazardous profession. Trysail himself shook his head, in a manner that expressed volumes, when Ludlow vented his humor on what the young man termed the luck of the smuggler; and the crews of the boats gazed after the retiring brigantine as the inhabitants of Japan would now most probably regard the passage of some vessel propelled by steam. As Mr. Luff was not neglectful of his duty, it was not long before the *Coquette* approached her boats. The delay occasioned by hoisting in the latter enabled the chase to increase the space between the two vessels to such a distance as to place her altogether beyond the reach of shot. Ludlow, however, gave his orders to pursue, the moment the ship was ready; and he hastened to conceal his disappointment in his own cabin.

"Luck is a merchant's surplus, while a living profit is the reward of his wits!" observed Alderman Van Beverout, who could scarce conceal the satisfaction he felt at the unexpected and repeated escapes of the brigantine. "Many a man gains doubloons, when he only looked for dollars; and many a market falls while the goods are in the course of clearance. There are Frenchmen enough, Captain Ludlow, to keep a brave officer in good humor; and the less reason to fret about a trifling mischance in overhauling a smuggler."

"I know not how highly you may prize your niece, Mr. Van Beverout; but were I the uncle of such a woman, the idea that she had become the infatuated victim of the arts of yon reckless villain would madden me."

"Paroxysms and strait-jackets! Happily you are not her uncle, Captain Ludlow, and therefore the less reason to be uneasy. The girl has a French fancy, and she is rummaging the smuggler's silks and laces; when her choice is made we shall have her back again, more beautiful than ever for a little finery."

"Choice! Oh, Alida, Alida! this is not the election that we had reason to expect from thy cultivated mind and proud sentiments!"

"The cultivation is my work, and the pride is an inheritance from old Etienne de Barberie," dryly rejoined Myndert. "But complaints never lowered a market nor raised the funds. Let us send for the Patroon, and take counsel coolly as to the easiest manner of finding our way back to the Lust in Rust, before her Majesty's ship gets too far from the coast of America."

"Thy pleasantry is unseasonable, sir. Your Patroon is gone with your niece, and a pleasant passage they are likely to enjoy in such company! We lost him in the expedition with our boats."

The Alderman stood aghast.

"Lost! Oloff Van Staats lost in the expedition of the boats! Evil betide the day when that discreet and affluent youth should be lost to the colony! Sir, you know not what you utter when you hazard so rash an opinion. The death of the young Patroon of Kinderhook would render one of the best and most substantial of our families extinct and leave the third best estate in the Province without a direct heir!"

"The calamity is not so overwhelming," returned the Captain, with bitterness. "The gentleman has boarded the smuggler, and gone with la belle Barberie to examine his silks and laces!"

Ludlow then explained the manner in which the Patroon had disappeared. When perfectly assured that no bodily harm had befallen his friend, the satisfaction of the Alderman was quite as vivid as his consternation had been apparent but the moment before.

"Gone with la belle Barberie to examine silks and laces!" he repeated, rubbing his hands together in delight. "Aye, there the blood of my old friend Stephanus begins to show itself! Your true Hollander is no mercurial Frenchman to beat his head and make grimaces at a shift in the wind, or a woman's frown; nor a bluster-

ing Englishman (you are of the colony yourself, young gentleman), to swear a big oath and swagger; but, as you see, a quiet, persevering, and in the main, an active son of old Batavia, who watches his opportunity, and goes into the very presence of——"

"Whom?" demanded Ludlow, perceiving that the Alderman had paused.

"Of his enemy; seeing that all the enemies of the Queen are necessarily the enemies of every loyal subject. Bravo, young Oloff! thou art a lad after my own heart, and no doubt—no doubt—fortune will favor the brave! Had a Hollander a proper footing on this earth, Captain Cornelius Ludlow, we should hear a different tale concerning the right to the narrow seas, and indeed to most other questions of commerce."

Ludlow rose with a bitter smile on his face, though with no ill feeling toward the man whose exultation was so natural.

"Mr. Van Staats may have reason to congratulate himself on his good fortune," he said, "though I much mistake if even his enterprise will succeed against the wiles of one so artful, and of an appearance so gay, as the man whose guest he has now become. Let the caprice of others be what it may, Alderman Van Beverout, my duty must be done. The smuggler, aided by chance and artifice, has thrice escaped me; the fourth time it may be our fortune. If this ship possesses the power to destroy the lawless rover, let him look to his fate."

With this menace on his lips, Ludlow quitted the cabin to resume his station on the deck, and to renew his unwearied watching of the movements of the chase.

The change of the wind was altogether in favor of the brigantine. It brought her to windward, and was the means of placing the two vessels in positions that enabled the *Water-Witch* to profit most by her peculiar construction. Consequently, when Ludlow resigned his post, he saw that the swift and light craft had trimmed everything close upon the wind, and that she was already so far ahead as to render the chances of bringing her again within range of his guns almost desperate; unless, indeed, some of the many vicissitudes, so common on the ocean, should interfere in his behalf. There remained little else to be done, therefore, but to crowd every sail on the *Coquette* that the ship could bear, and to endeavor to keep within sight of the chase during the hours of darkness which must so shortly succeed. But before the sun had fallen to the level of the water, the hull of the *Water-Witch* had disappeared; and when the day closed, no part of her airy outline was visible but that which was known to belong to her upper and lighter spars. In a few minutes afterward darkness covered the ocean, and the seamen of the royal cruiser were left to pursue their object at random.

How far the *Coquette* had run during the night does not appear, but when her commander made his appearance on the following morning, his long and anxious gaze met no other reward than a naked horizon. On every side the sea presented the same waste of water. No object was visible but the sea-fowl wheeling on his wide wing, and the summit of the irregular and green billows. Throughout that and many succeeding days the cruiser continued to plow the ocean, sometimes running large, with everything opened to the breeze that the wide booms would spread, and, at others, pitching and laboring with adverse winds, as if bent on prevailing over the obstacles which even nature presented to her progress. The head of the worthy Alderman had got completely turned, and, though he patiently awaited the result, before the week was ended he knew not even the direction in which the ship was steering. At length he had reason to believe that the end of their cruise approached. The efforts of the seamen were observed to relax, and the ship was permitted to pursue her course under easier sail.

It was past meridian, on one of those days of moderate exertion, that Francois was seen stealing from below, and staggering from gun to gun, to a place in the center of the ship, where he habitually took the air in good weather, and where he might dispose of his person, equally

without presuming too far on the good nature of his superiors, and without courting too much intimacy with the coarser herd, who composed the common crew.

"Ah!" exclaimed the valet, addressing his remark to the midshipman who has already been mentioned by the name of Hopper, "voila la terre! Quel bonheur! I shall be so happy—le batiment be trop agreable, mais vous savez, Monsieur Aspirant, que je ne suis point marin; what be le nom du pays?"

"They call it France," returned the boy, who understood enough of the other's language to comprehend his meaning; "and a very good country it is—for those that like it."

"Ma foi, non!" exclaimed Francois, recoiling a pace between amazement and delight.

"Call it Holland, then, if you prefer that country most."

"Dites-moi, Monsieur Hoppair," continued the valet, laying a trembling finger on the arm of the remorseless young rogue; "est-ce la France?"

"One would think a man of your observation could tell that for himself. Do you see the church-tower, with a chateau in the background, and a village built in a heap by its side? Now look into yon wood! There is a walk, straight as a ship's wake in smooth water, and one—two—three—aye, eleven statues, with just one nose among them all!"

"Ma foi—dere is not no wood, and no chateau, and no village, and no statue, and no nose—mais, Monsieur, je suis age—est-ce la France?"

"Oh, you miss nothing by having an indifferent sight, for I shall explain it all as we go along. You see yonder hillside, looking like a pattern-card, of green and yellow stripes, or a signal-book, with the flags of all nations, placed side by side—well, that is—les champs; and this beautiful wood, with all the branches trimmed till it looks like so many raw marines at drill, is—la foret——"

The credulity of the warm-hearted valet could swallow no more; but, assuming a look of commiseration and dignity, he drew back, and left the young tyro of the sea to enjoy his joke with a companion who just then joined him.

In the meantime, the *Coquette* continued to advance. The chateau, and churches, and villages of the midshipman soon changed into a low, sandy beach, with a background of stunted pines, relieved here and there by an opening, in which appeared the comfortable habitation and numerous out-buildings of some substantial yeoman or occasionally embellished by the residence of a country proprietor. Toward noon, the crest of a hill rose from the sea; and, just as the sun set behind a barrier of mountain, the ship passed the sandy cape, and anchored at the spot that she had quitted when first joined by her commander after his visit to the brigantine. The vessel was soon moored, the light yards were struck, and a boat was lowered into the water. Ludlow and the Alderman then descended the side, and proceeded toward the mouth of the Shrewsbury. Although it was nearly dark before they had reached the shore, there remained light enough to enable the former to discover an object of unusual appearance floating in the bay, and at no great distance from the direction of his barge. He was led by curiosity to steer for it.

"Cruisers and Water-Witches!" muttered Myndert, when they were near enough to perceive the nature of the floating object. "That brazen hussy haunts us, as if we had robbed her of gold! Let us set foot on land, and nothing short of a deputation from the city council shall ever tempt me to wander from my own abode again!"

Ludlow shifted the helm of the boat, and resumed his course toward the river. He required no explanation to tell him of the nature of the artifice by which he had been duped. The nicely-balanced tub, the upright spar, and the extinguished lantern, with the features of the female of the malign smile traced on its horn faces, reminded him, at once, of the false light by which the *Coquette* had been lured from her course on the night she sailed in pursuit of the brigantine.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"His daughter, and the heir of his kingdom,
. . . . hath referred herself
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman."
—CYMBELINE.

WHEN Alderman Van Beverout and Ludlow drew near to the Lust in Rust, it was already dark. Night had overtaken them at some distance from the place of landing; and the mountain already threw its shadow across the river, the narrow strip of land that separated it from the sea, and far upon the ocean itself. Neither had an opportunity of making his observations on the condition of things in and about the villa until they ascended nearly to its level, and had even entered the narrow but fragrant lawn in front. Just before they arrived at the gate which opened on the latter, the Alderman paused, and addressed his companion, with more of the manner of their ancient confidence than he had manifested during the few preceding days of their intercourse.

"You must have observed, that the events of this little excursion on the water have been rather of a domestic than of a public character," he said. "Thy father was a very ancient and much esteemed friend of mine, and I am far from certain that there is not some affinity between us, in the way of intermarriages. Thy worthy mother, who is a thrifty woman and a small talker, had some of the blood of my own stock. It would grieve me to see the good understanding, which these recollections have created, in any manner interrupted. I admit, sir, that revenue is to the state what the soul is to the body —the moving and governing principle; and that, as the last would be a tenantless house without its inhabitants, so the first would be an exacting and troublesome master without its proper products. But there is no need of pushing a principle to extremities! If this brigantine be, as you appear to suspect, and indeed as we have some reason from various causes to infer, the vessel called the *Water-Witch*, she might have been a legal prize had she fallen into your power; but now that she has escaped, I cannot say what may be your intentions: but were thy excellent father, the worthy member of the king's council, living, so discreet a man would think much before he opened his lips, to say more than is discreet, on this or any other subject."

"Whatever course I may believe my duty dictates, you may safely rely on my discretion concerning the—the remarkable —the very decided step which your niece has seen proper to take," returned the young man, who did not make this allusion to Alida without betraying, by the tremor of his voice, how great was her influence still over him. "I see no necessity of violating the domestic feelings to which you allude, by aiding to feed the ears of the idly curious with the narrative of her errors."

Ludlow stopped suddenly, leaving the uncle to infer what he would wish to add.

"This is generous, and manly, and like a loyal—lover, Captain Ludlow," returned the Alderman; "though it is not exactly what I intended to suggest. We will not, however, multiply words in the night air —ha! when the cat is asleep the mice are seen to play! Those night-riding, horse-racing blacks have taken possession of Alida's pavilion; and we may be thankful the poor girl's rooms are not as large as Harlem Common, or we should hear the feet of some hard-driven beast galloping about in them."

The Alderman, in his turn, cut short his speech, and started as if one of the spooks of the colony had suddenly presented itself to his eyes. His language drew the look of his companion toward la Cour des Fees; and Ludlow, at the same moment as the uncle, caught an unequivocal view of la belle Barberie, as she moved before the open window of her apartment. The latter was about to rush forward, but the hand of Myndert arrested the impetuous movement.

"Here is more matter for our wits than our legs," observed the cool and prudent burgher. "That was the form of my ward and niece, or the daughter of old Etienne Barberie has a double. Francois! didst thou not see the image of a woman at the window of the pavilion, or are we

deceived by our wishes? I have sometimes been deluded in an unaccountable manner, Captain Ludlow, when my mind has been thoroughly set on the bargain, in the quality of the goods; for the most liberal of us all are subject to mental weakness of this nature, when hope is alive!"

"Certainement—oui!" exclaimed the eager valet. "Quel malheur to be oblige to go on la mer when Mam'selle Alide nevair quit la maison! J'etais sur, que nous trompions, car jamais la famille de Barberie love to be marins!"

"Enough, good Francois; the family of Barberie is as earthly as a fox. Go and notify the idle rogues in my kitchen that their master is at hand; and remember, that there is no necessity for speaking of all the wonders we have seen on the great deep. Captain Ludlow, we will now join my dutiful niece with as little fracas as possible."

Ludlow eagerly accepted the invitation, and instantly followed the dogmatical and seemingly unmoved Alderman toward the dwelling. As the lawn was crossed, they involuntarily paused a moment to look in at the open windows of the pavilion.

La belle Barberie had ornamented la Cour des Fees with a portion of that national taste which she inherited from her father. The heavy magnificence that distinguished the reign of Louis XIV. had scarcely descended to one of the middling rank of Monsieur de Barberie, who had consequently brought with him to the place of his exile merely those tasteful usages which appear almost exclusively the property of the people from whom he had sprung, without the incumbrance and cost of the more pretending fashions of the period. These usages had become blended with the more domestic and comfortable habits of English, or what is nearly the same thing, of American life—an union which, when it is found, perhaps produces the most just and happy medium of the useful and agreeable. Alida was seated by a small table of mahogany, deeply absorbed in the contents of a little volume that lay before her. By her side stood a tea-service, the cups and the vessels of which were of the diminutive size then used, though exquisitely wrought, and of the most beautiful material. Her dress was a negligee suited to her years; and her whole figure breathed that air of comfort, mingled with grace, which seems the proper quality of the sex, and which renders the privacy of an elegant woman so attractive and peculiar. Her mind was intent on the book, and the little silver urn hissed at her elbow apparently unheeded.

"This is the picture I have loved to draw," half-whispered Ludlow, "when gales and storms have kept me on the deck throughout many a dreary and tempestuous night! When body and mind have been impatient of fatigue, this is the repose I have most coveted, and for which I have even dared to hope."

"The China trade will come to something in time, and you are an excellent judge of comfort, Master Ludlow," returned the Alderman. "That girl now has a warm glow on her cheek, which would seem to swear she never faced a breeze in her life; and it is not easy to fancy that one who looks so comfortable has lately been frolicking among the dolphins. Let us enter."

Alderman Van Beverout was not accustomed to use much ceremony in his visits to his niece. Without appearing to think any announcement necessary, therefore, the dogmatical burgher coolly opened a door, and ushered his companion into the pavilion.

If the meeting between la belle Alida and her guests was distinguished by the affected indifference of the latter, their seeming ease was quite equaled by that of the lady. She laid aside her book with a calmness that might have been expected had they parted but an hour before, and which sufficiently assured both Ludlow and her uncle that their return was known and their presence expected.

She simply arose at their entrance, and with a smile that betokened breeding rather than feeling, she requested them to be seated. The composure of his niece had the effect to throw the Alderman into a brown study, while the young sailor scarcely knew which to admire the most,

the exceeding loveliness of a woman who was always so beautiful, or her admirable self-possession in a scene that most others would have found sufficiently embarrassing. Alida, herself, appeared to feel no necessity for an explanation; for, when her guests were seated, she took occasion to say, while busied in pouring out the tea—

"You find me prepared to offer the refreshment of a cup of delicious bohea. I think my uncle calls it the tea of the *Caernarvon Castle*."

"A lucky ship, both in her passages and her wares! Yes, it is the article you name; and I can recommend it to all who wish to purchase. But, niece of mine, will you condescend to acquaint this commander in her Majesty's service, and a poor Alderman of her good city of New York, how long you may have been expecting our company?"

Alida felt at her girdle, and drawing out a small and richly ornamented watch, she coolly examined its hands, as if to learn the hour.

"We are nine. I think it was past the turn of the day, when Dinah first mentioned that this pleasure might be expected. But I should also tell you that packages which seem to contain letters have arrived from town."

This was giving a new and sudden direction to the thoughts of the Alderman. He had refrained from entering on those explanations which the circumstances seemed to require, because he well knew that he stood on dangerous ground, and that more might be said than he wished his companion to hear, no less than from amazement at the composure of his ward. He was not sorry, therefore, to have an excuse to delay his inquiries, that appeared so much in character as that of reading the communications of his business correspondents.

Swallowing the contents of the tiny cup he held, at a gulp, the eager merchant seized the packet that Alida now offered; and muttering a few words of apology to Ludlow, he left the pavilion.

Until now the commander of the *Coquette* had not spoken. Wonder, mingled with indignation, sealed his mouth, though he had endeavored to penetrate the veil which Alida had drawn around her conduct and motives, by a diligent use of his eyes. During the first few moments of the interview, he thought that he could detect, in the midst of her studied calmness, a melancholy smile struggling around her beautiful mouth; but only once had their looks met, as she turned her full, rich, and dark eyes furtively on his face, as if curious to know the effect produced by her manner on the mind of the young sailor.

"Have the enemies of the Queen reason to regret the cruise of the *Coquette?*" asked la Belle, hurriedly, when she found her glance detected; "or have they dreaded to encounter a prowess that has already proved their inferiority?"

"Fear, or prudence, or perhaps I might say conscience, has made them wary," returned Ludlow, pointedly emphasizing the latter words. "We have run from the Hook to the edge of the Grand Bank, and returned without success."

"'Tis unlucky. But, though the French escaped, have none of the lawless met with punishment? There is a rumor among the slaves that the brigantine which visited us is an object of suspicion to the government?"

"Suspicion! But I may apply to la belle Barberie, to know whether the character her commander has obtained be merited?"

Alida smiled, and, her admirer thought, as sweetly as ever.

"It would be a sign of extraordinary complaisance, were Captain Ludlow to apply to the girls of the colony for instruction in his duty! We may be secret encouragers of the contraband, but surely we are not to be suspected of any greater familiarity with their movements. These hints may compel me to abandon the pleasures of the Lust in Rust, and to seek air and health in some less exposed situation. Happily the banks of the Hudson offer many that one need be fastidious indeed to reject."

"Among which you count the Manor House of Kinderhook?"

Again Alida smiled, and Ludlow thought it was triumphantly.

"The dwelling of Oloff Van Staats is said to be commodious, and not badly placed. I have seen it——"

"In your image of the future?" said the young man, observing she hesitated.

Alida laughed downright. But immediately recovering her self-command, she replied:

"Not so fancifully. My knowledge of the beauties of the house of Mr. Van Staats is confined to very unpoetical glimpses from the river, in passing and repassing. The chimneys are twisted in the most approved style of the Dutch Brabant, and, although wanting the stork's nest on their summits, it seems as if there might be that woman's tempter, comfort, around the hearths beneath. The offices, too, have an enticing air for a thrifty housewife!"

"Which office, in compliment to the worthy Patroon, you intend shall not long be vacant?"

Alida was playing with a spoon, curiously wrought to represent the stem and leaves of a tea-plant. She started, dropped the implement, and raised her eyes to the face of her companion. The look was steady, and not without an interest in the evident concern betrayed by the young man.

"It will never be filled by me, Ludlow," was the answer, uttered solemnly, and with a decision that denoted a resolution fixed.

"That declaration removes a mountain! Oh! Alida, if you could as easily——"

"Hush!" whispered the other, rising and standing for a moment in an attitude of intense expectation. Her eye became brighter, and the bloom of her cheek even deeper than before, while pleasure and hope were both strongly depicted on her beautiful face. "Hush!" she continued, motioning to Ludlow to repress his feelings. "Did you hear nothing?"

The disappointed and yet admiring young man was silent, though he watched her singularly interesting air and lovely features, with all the intenseness that seemed to characterize her own deportment. As no sound followed that which Alida had heard, or fancied she had heard, she resumed her seat, and appeared to lend her attention once more to her companion.

"You were speaking of mountains?" she said, scarce knowing what she uttered. "The passage between the bays of Newburgh and Tappan has scarce a rival, as I have heard from traveled men."

"I was indeed speaking of a mountain, but it was of one that weighs on my heart. Your inexplicable conduct and cruel indifference have heaped it on my feelings, Alida. You have said that there is no hope for Oloff Van Staats, and one syllable, spoken with your native ingenuousness and sincerity, has had the effect to blow all my apprehensions from that quarter to the winds. There remains only to account for your absence, to resume the whole of your power over one who is but too readily disposed to confide in all you say or do."

La belle Barberie seemed touched. Her glance at the young sailor was kinder, and her voice wanted some of its ordinary steadiness in the reply.

"That power has then been weakened."

"You will despise me if I say no—you will distrust me if I say yes."

"Then silence seems the course best adapted to maintain our present amity. Surely I heard a blow struck, lightly, on the shutter of that window!"

"Hope sometimes deceives us. This repeated belief would seem to say that you expect a visitor?"

A distinct tap on the shutter confirmed the impression of the mistress of the pavilion. Alida looked at her companion and appeared embarrassed. Her color varied, and she seemed anxious to utter something that either her feelings or her prudence suppressed.

"Captain Ludlow, you have once before been an unexpected witness of an interview in la Cour des Fees that has, I fear, subjected me to unfavorable surmises. But one manly and generous as yourself can have indulgence for the little vanities of woman. I expect a visit that, perhaps, a queen's officer should not countenance."

"I am no exciseman, to pry into ward-

robes and secret repositories, but one whose duty it is to act only on the high seas, and against the more open violators of the law. If you have any without, whose presence you desire, let them enter without dread of my office. When we meet in a more suitable place, I shall know how to take my revenge."

His companion looked grateful, and bowed her acknowledgments. She then made a ringing sound by using a spoon on the interior of the vessels of the tea equipage. The shrubbery which shaded a window stirred, and presently the young stranger, already so well known in the former pages of this work, and in the scene of the brigantine, appeared in the low balcony. His person was scarcely seen, before a light bale of goods was tossed past him into the center of the room.

"I send my certificate of character as an avant-courier," said the gay dealer in contraband, or Master Seadrift, as he was called by the Alderman, touching his cap gallantly to the mistress of la Cour des Fees, and then somewhat more ceremoniously to her companion; after which he returned the gold-bound covering to its seat, on a bed of rich and glossy curls, and sought his package. "Here is one more customer than I bargained for, and I look to more than common gain! We have met before, Captain Ludlow."

"We have, Sir Skimmer of the Seas, and we shall meet again. Winds may change, and fortune yet favor the right!"

"We trust to the sea-green lady's care," returned the extraordinary smuggler, pointing with a species of reverence, real or affected, to the image that was beautifully worked, in rich colors, on the velvet of his cap. "What has been will be, and the past gives a hope for the future. We meet here on neutral ground, I trust."

"I am the commander of a royal cruiser, sir," haughtily returned the other.

"Queen Anne may be proud of her servant!—but we neglect our affairs. A thousand pardons, lovely mistress of la Cour des Fees. This meeting of two rude mariners does a slight to your beauty, and little credit to the fealty due the sex. Having done with all compliments, I have to offer certain articles that never fail to cause the brightest eyes to grow more brilliant, and at which duchesses have gazed with many longings."

"You speak with confidence of your associations, Master Seadrift, and rate noble personages among your customers as familiarly as if you dealt in offices of State."

"This skillful servitor of the Queen will tell you, lady, that the wind which is a gale on the Atlantic may scarce cool the burning cheek of a girl on the land, and that the links in life are as curiously interlocked as the ropes of a ship. The Ephesian temple and the Indian wigwam rested on the same earth."

"From which you infer that rank does not alter nature. We must admit, Captain Ludlow, that Master Seadrift understands a woman's heart when he tempts her with stores of tissues gay as these."

Ludlow had watched the speakers in silence. The manner of Alida was far less embarrassed than when he had before seen her in the smuggler's company; and his blood fired, when he saw that their eyes met with a secret and friendly intelligence. He had remained, however, with a resolution to be calm, and to know the worse. Conquering the expression of his feelings by a great effort, he answered with an exterior of composure, though not without some of that bitterness in his emphasis which he felt at his heart.

"If Master Seadrift has this knowledge he may value himself on his good fortune," was the reply.

"Much intercourse with the sex, who are my best customers, has something helped me," returned the cavalier dealer in contraband. "Here is a brocade whose fellow is worn openly in the presence of our royal mistress, though it came from the forbidden looms of Italy; and the ladies of the court return from patriotically dancing in the fabrics of home, to please the public eye, once in the year, to wear these more ageeable inventions, all the rest of it, to please themselves. Tell me, why does the Englishman, with his pale sun, spend thousands to

force a sickly imitation of the gifts of the tropics, but because he pines for forbidden fruit? or why does your Paris gourmand roll a fig on his tongue that a lazzarone of Naples would cast into his bay, but because he wishes to enjoy the bounties of a low latitude under a watery sky? I have seen an individual feast on the eau sucre of an European pine, that cost a guinea, while his palate would have refused the same fruit, with its delicious compound of acid and sweet, mellowed to ripeness under a burning sun, merely because he could have it for nothing. This is the secret of our patronage; and as the sex are most liable to its influence, we owe them most gratitude."

"You have traveled, Master Seadrift," returned la Belle, smiling, while she tossed the rich contents of the bale on the carpet, "and treat of usages as familiarly as you speak of dignities."

"The lady of the sea-green mantle does not permit an idle servant. We follow the direction of her guiding hand; sometimes it points our course among the isles of the Adriatic, and at others on your stormy American coasts. There is little of Europe between Gibraltar and the Cattegat that I have not visited."

"But Italy has been the favorite, if one may judge by the number of her fabrics that you produce."

"Italy, France, and Flanders divide my custom; though you are right in believing the former most in favor. Many years of early life did I pass on the noble coasts of that romantic region. One who protected and guided my infancy and youth even left me for a time under instruction on the little plain of Sorrento."

"And where can this plain be found?—for the residence of so famous a rover may, one day, become the theme of song, and is likely to occupy the leisure of the curious."

"The grace of the speaker may well excuse the irony! Sorrento is a town on the southern shore of the renowned Naples bay. Fire has wrought many changes in that soft but wild country; and if, as religionists believe, the fountains of the great deep were ever broken up, and the earth's crust disturbed, to permit its secret springs to issue on the surface, this may have been one of the spots chosen by Him whose touch leaves marks that are indelible in which to show His power. The bed of the earth itself, in all that region, appears to have been but the vomitings of volcanoes; and the Sorrentine passes his peaceful life in the bed of an extinguished crater. 'Tis curious to see in what manner the men of the middle ages have built their town, on the margin of the sea, where the element has swallowed one-half the ragged basin, and how they have taken the yawning crevices of the tufa for ditches to protect their walls. I have visited many lands, and seen Nature in nearly every clime; but no spot has yet presented, in a single view, so pleasant a combination of natural objects, mingled with mighty recollections, as that lovely abode on the Sorrentine cliffs!"

"Recount me these pleasures that in memory seem so agreeable, while I examine farther into the contents of the bale."

The gay young freetrader paused, and seemed lost in images of the past. Then, with a melancholy smile, he soon continued. "Though many years are gone," he said, "I can recall the beauties of that scene as vividly as if they still stood before the eye. Our abode was on the verge of the cliffs. In front lay the deep blue water, and on its farther shore was a line of objects such as accident or design rarely assembles in one view. Fancy thyself, lady, at my side, and follow the curvature of the northern shore, as I trace the outline of that glorious scene! That high, mountainous and ragged island on the extreme left is modern Ischia. Its origin is unknown, though piles of lava lie along its coast, which seems fresh as that thrown from the mountain yesterday. The long, low bit of land, insulated like its neighbor, is called Procida, a scion of ancient Greece. Its people still preserve, in dress and speech, marks of their origin. The narrow strait conducts you to a high and naked bluff. That is the Misenum of old. Here Æneas came to land, and Rome held her fleets, and thence Pliny took the water, to

get a nearer view of the labors of the volcano, after its awakening from centuries of sleep. In the hollow of the ridge, between that naked bluff and the next swell of the mountain, lie the fabulous Styx, the Elysian fields, and the place of the dead, as fixed by the Mantuan. More on the height and nearer to the sea, lie, buried in the earth, the vast vaults of the Piscina Mirabilis, and the gloomy caverns of the Hundred Chambers; places that equally denote the luxury and the despotism of Rome.

"Nearer to the vast pile of castle, that is visible so many leagues, is the graceful and winding Baiæan harbor, and against the side of its sheltering hills once lay the city of villas. To that sheltered hill emperors, consuls, poets and warriors crowded from the capital, in quest of repose, and to breathe the pure air of a spot in which pestilence has since made its abode. The earth is still covered with the remains of their magnificence, and ruins of temples and baths are scattered freely among the olives and fig trees of the peasant. A fainter bluff limits the northeastern boundary of the little bay. On it once stood the dwellings of emperors. There Cæsar sought retirement, and the warm springs on its side are yet called the baths of the bloody Nero. That small, conical hill, which, as you see, possesses a greener and fresher look than the adjoining land, is a cone ejected by the caldron beneath, but two brief centuries since. It occupies, in part, the site of the ancient Lucrine lake. All that remains of that famous receptacle of the epicure is the small and shallow sheet at its base, which is separated from the sea by a mere thread of sand. More in the rear, and surrounded by dreary hills, lie the waters of Avernus. On their banks still stand the ruins of a temple, in which rites were celebrated to the infernal deities. The grotto of the Sibyl pierces that ridge on the left, and the Cumæan passage is nearly in its rear. The town which is seen a mile to the right is Pozzuoli—a port of the ancients, and a spot now visited for its temples of Jupiter and Neptune, its moldering amphitheater, and its half-buried tombs. Here Caligula attempted his ambitious bridge; and while crossing thence to Baiæ, the vile Nero had the life of his own mother assailed.

"It was there, too, that holy Paul came to land, when journeying a prisoner to Rome. The small but high island, nearly in its front, is Nisida, the place to which Marcus Brutus retired after the deed at the foot of Pompey's statue, where he possessed a villa, and whence he and Cassius sailed to meet the shade and the vengeance of the murdered Cæsar at Philippi. Then comes a crowd of sites more known in the middle ages; though just below that mountain, in the background, is the famous subterranean road of which Strabo and Seneca are said to speak, and through which the peasant still daily drives his ass to the markets of the modern city. At its entrance is the reputed tomb of Virgil, and then commences an amphitheater of white and terraced dwellings. This is noisy Napoli itself, crowned with its rocky castle of St. Elmo! The vast plain, to the right, is that which held the enervating Capua and so many other cities on its bosom. To this succeeds the insulated mountain of the volcano, with its summit torn in triple tops. 'Tis said that villas and villages, towns and cities, lie buried beneath the vineyards and palaces which crowd its base. The ancient and unhappy city of Pompeii stood on that luckless plain which, following the shores of the bay, comes next; and then we take up the line of the mountain promontory, which forms the Sorrentine side of the water!"

"One who has had such schooling, should know better how to turn it to a good account," said Ludlow, sternly, when the excited smuggler ceased to speak.

"In other lands, men derive their learning from books; in Italy, children acquire knowledge by the study of visible things," was the undisturbed answer.

"Some from this country are fond of believing that our own bay, these summer skies, and the climate in general, should have a strict resemblance to those of a region which lies precisely in our own latitude," observed Alida, so hastily as to

betray a desire to preserve the peace between her guests.

"That your Manhattan and Raritan waters are broad and pleasant, none can deny, and that lovely beings dwell on their banks, lady," returned Seadrift, gallantly lifting his cap, "my own senses have witnessed. But 'twere wiser to select some other point of your excellence for comparison than a competition with the glorious waters, the fantastic and mountain isles, and the sunny hillsides of modern Napoli! 'Tis certain the latitude is even in your favor, and that a beneficent sun does not fail of its office in one region more than in the other. But the forests of America are still too pregnant of vapors and exhalations not to impair the purity of the native air. If I have seen much of the Mediterranean, neither am I a stranger to these coasts. While there are so many points of resemblance in their climates, there are also many and marked causes of difference."

"Teach us, then, what forms these distinctions, that, in speaking of our bay and skies, we may not be led into error."

"You do me honor, lady; I am of no great schooling, and of humble powers of speech. Still, the little that observation may have taught me shall not be churlishly withheld. Your Italian atmosphere, taking the humidity of the seas, is sometimes hazy. Still water in large bodies, other than in the two seas, is little known in those distant countries. Few objects in nature are dryer than an Italian river, during those months when the sun has most influence. The effect is visible in the air, which is in general elastic, dry, and obedient to the general laws of the climate. There floats less exhalation, in the form of fine and nearly invisible vapor, than in these wooded regions. At least, so he of whom I spoke, as one who guided my youth, was wont to say."

"You hesitate to tell us of our skies, our evening light, and of our bay."

"It shall be said, and said sincerely. Of the bays, each seems to have been appropriated to that for which Nature most intended it—the one is poetic, indolent, and full of graceful but glorious beauty; more pregnant of enjoyment than of usefulness. The other will, one day, be the mart of the world."

"You still shrink from pronouncing on their beauty," said Alida, disappointed in spite of an affected indifference on the subject.

"It is ever the common fault of old communities to overvalue themselves, and to undervalue new actors in the great drama of nations, as men long successful disregard the efforts of new aspirants for favor," said Seadrift, while he looked with amazement at the pettish eye of the frowning beauty. "In this instance, however, Europe has not so greatly erred. They who see much resemblance between the bay of Naples and this of Manhattan have fertile brains; since it rests altogether on the circumstances that there is much water in both, and a passage between an island and the mainland, in one, to resemble a passage between two islands in the other. This is an estuary, that a gulf; and while the former has the green and turbid water of a shelving shore and tributary rivers, the latter has the blue and limpid element of a deep sea. In these distinctions, I take no account of ragged and rocky mountains, with the indescribable play of golden and rosy light upon their broken surfaces, nor of a coast that teems with the recollections of three thousand years!"

"I fear to question more. But surely our skies may be mentioned, even by the side of those you vaunt?"

"Of the skies, truly, you have more reason to be confident. I remember that standing on the Cape di Monte, which overlooks the little, picturesque, and crowded beach of the Marina Grande, and Sorrento, a spot that teems with all that is poetic in the fisherman's life, he of whom I have spoken once pointed to the transparent vault above, and said, 'There is the moon of America!' The colors of the rocket were not more vivid than the stars that night, for a Tramontana had swept every impurity from the air, far upon the neighboring sea. But nights like that are rare, indeed, in any clime!

The inhabitants of low latitudes enjoy them occasionally; those of higher, never."

"Then our flattering belief, that these western sunsets rival those of Italy, is delusion?"

"Not so, lady. They rival without resembling. The color of the etui, on which so fair a hand is resting, is not softer than the hues one sees in the heavens of Italy. But if your evening sky wants the pearly light, the rosy clouds, and the soft tints which, at that hour, melt into each other, across the entire vault of Napoli, it far excels in the vividness of the glow, in the depth of the transitions, and in the richness of colors. Those are only more delicate, while these are more gorgeous! When there shall be less exhalation from your forests, the same causes may produce the same effects. Until then America must be content to pride herself on an exhibition of Nature's beauty in a new, though scarcely in a less pleasing, form."

"Then they who come among us from Europe are but half right when they deride the pretensions of our bay and heavens?"

"Which is much nearer the truth than they are wont to be, on the subject of this continent. Speak of the many rivers, the double outlets and numberless basins, and the unequaled facilities of your Manhattan harbor; for in time they will come to render all the beauties of the unrivaled bay of Naples vain; but tempt not the stranger to push the comparison beyond. Be grateful for your skies, lady, for few live under fairer or more beneficent. But I tire you with these opinions, when here are colors that have more charms for a young and lively imagination than even the tints of Nature!"

La belle Barberie smiled on the dealer in contraband with an interest that sickened Ludlow; and she was about to reply, in better humor, when the voice of her uncle announced his near approach.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"There shall be, in England, seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny. The three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops; and I will make it felony to drink small beer."—JACK CADE.

HAD Alderman Van Beverout been a party in the preceding dialogue, he could not have uttered words more apposite than the exclamation with which he first saluted the ears of those in the pavilion.

"Gales and climates!" exclaimed the merchant, entering with an open letter in his hand. "Here are advices received, by way of Curacoa and the coast of Africa, that the good ship *Musk-Rat* met winds off the Azores which lengthened her passage home to seventeen weeks; this is too much precious time wasted between markets, Captain Cornelius Ludlow, and 'twill do discredit to the good character of the ship, which has hitherto always maintained a sound reputation, never needing more than the regular seven months to make the voyage home and out again. If our vessels fall into this lazy train, we shall never get a skin to Bristol till it is past use. What have we here, niece! Merchandise! and of a suspicious fabric! Who has the invoice of these goods, and in what vessel were they shipped?"

"These are questions that may be better answered by their owner," returned la Belle, pointing gravely, and not without tremor in her voice, toward the dealer in contraband, who, at the approach of the Alderman, had shrunk back as far as possible from view.

Myndert cast an uneasy glance at the unmoved countenance of the commander of the royal cruiser, after having bestowed a brief but understanding look at the contents of the bale. "Captain Ludlow, the chaser is chased!" he said. "After sailing about the Atlantic, for a week or more, like a Jew broker's clerk running up and down the Boom Key at Rotterdam, to get off a consignment of damaged tea, we are fairly caught ourselves! To what fall in prices, or change in the sentiments of the Board of Trade, am I indebted for the honor of this visit, Master a—a—a—gay dealer in green ladies and bright tissues?"

The confident and gallant manner of the freetrader had vanished. In its place there appeared a hesitating and embarrassed air that the individual was not wont to exhibit, blended with some apparent indecision on the subject on his reply.

"It is the business of those who hazard much in order to minister to the wants of life," he said, after a pause that was sufficiently expressive of the entire change in his demeanor, "to see customers where there is a reputation for liberality. I hope my boldness will be overlooked, on account of its motive, and that you will aid the lady in judging of the value of my articles, and of their reasonableness as to price, with your own superior experience."

Myndert was quite as much astonished by this language, and the subdued manner of the smuggler, as Ludlow himself. When he expected the heaviest demand on his address, in order to check the usual forward and reckless familiarity of Seadrift, in order that his connections with the Skimmer of the Seas might be as much as possible involved in ambiguity, to his own amazement he found his purpose more than aided by the sudden and extraordinary respect with which he was treated. Emboldened, and perhaps a little elevated in his own esteem, by this unexpected deference, which the worthy Alderman, shrewd as he was in common, did not fail, like other men, to impute to some inherent quality of his own, he answered with a greater depth of voice and a more protecting air than he might otherwise have deemed it prudent to assume to one who had so frequently given him proofs of his own fearless manner of viewing things.

"This is being more eager as a trader than prudent as one who should know the value of credit," he said, making, at the same time, a lofty gesture to betoken indulgence for so venial an error. "We must overlook the mistake, Captain Ludlow, since, as the young man truly observes in his defense, gain acquired in honest traffic is a commendable and wholesome pursuit. One who appears as if he might not be ignorant of the laws, should know that our virtuous Queen and her wise counselors have decided that Mother England can produce most that a colonist can consume! Aye! and that she can consume, too, most that the colonist can produce!"

"I pretend not to this ignorance, sir; but, in pursuing my humble barter, I merely follow a principle of nature by endeavoring to provide for my own interests. We of the contraband do but play at hazard with the authorities. When we pass the gauntlet unharmed, we gain; and when we lose, the servants of the crown find their profit. The stakes are equal, and the game should not be stigmatized as unfair. Would the rulers of the world once remove the unnecessary shackles they impose on commerce, our calling would disappear, and the name of freetrader would then belong to the richest and most esteemed houses."

The Alderman drew a long, low whistle. Motioning to his companion to be seated, he placed his own compact person in a chair, crossed his legs with an air of self-complacency, and resumed the discourse.

"These are very pretty sentiments, Master—a—a—a—you bear a worthy name no doubt, my ingenious commentator on commerce?"

"They call me Seadrift when they spare a harsher term," returned the other, meekly declining to be seated.

"These are pretty sentiments, Master Seadrift, and they much become a gentleman who lives by practical comments on the revenue laws. This is a wise world, Captain Cornelius Ludlow, and in it there are many men whose heads are filled, like bales of goods, with a general assortment of ideas. Hornbooks and primers! Here have Van Bummel, Schoenbroeck, and Van der Donck, just sent me a very neatly-folded pamphlet, written in good Leyden Dutch, to prove that trade is an exchange of what the author calls equivalents, and that nations have nothing to do but throw open their ports in order to make a millennium among the merchants."

"There are many ingenious men who entertain the same opinions," observed Ludlow, steady in his resolution to be

merely a quiet observer of all that passed.

"What cannot a cunning head devise, to spoil paper with! Trade is a racer, gentlemen, and merchants the jockeys who ride. He who carries most weight may lose; but then Nature does not give all men the same dimensions, and judges are as necessary to the struggles of the mart as those of the course. Go, mount your gelding if you are lucky enough to have one that has not been melted into a weasel by the heartless blacks, and ride out to Harlem Flats on a fine October day, and witness the manner in which the trial of speed is made. The rogues of riders cut in here and over there; now the whip and now the spur; and though they start fair, which is more than can always be said of trade, some one is sure to win. When it is neck and neck, then the heat is to be gone over, until the best bottom gains the prize."

"Why is it then that men of deep reflection so often think that commerce flourishes most when least encumbered?"

"Why is one man born to make laws, and another to break them? Does not the horse run faster with his four legs free, then when in hopples? But in trade, Master Seadrift, and Captain Cornelius Ludlow, each of us is his own jockey; and putting the aid of custom-house laws out of the question, just as Nature has happened to make him. Fat or lean, big bones or fine bones, he must get to the goal as well as he can. Therefore your heavy weights call out for sand-bags and belts, to make all even. That the steed may be crushed with his load is no proof that his chance of winning will not be better by bringing all the riders to the same level."

"But to quit these similes," continued Ludlow, "if trade be but an exchange of equivalents——"

"Beggary and stoppages!" interrupted the Alderman, who was far more dogmatical than courteous in argument. "This is the language of men who have read all sorts of books but ledgers. Here have I advices from Tongue & Twaddle, of London, which state the net proceeds of a little adventure, shipped by the brig *Moose*, that reached the river on the 16th of April, ultimo. The history of the whole transaction can be put in a child's muff—you are a discreet youth, Captain Cornelius; and as to you, Master Seadrift, the affair is altogether out of your line—therefore, as I was observing, here are the items, made only a fortnight since, in the shape of a memorandum;" while speaking the Alderman had placed his spectacles and drawn his tablets from a pocket. Adjusting himself to the light, he continued: "Paid bill of Sand, Furnace, and Glass, for beads, £3 2 6. Package and box, 1 10½. Shipping charges and freight, 11 4. Insurance averaged at, 1 5. Freight, charges and commission of agent, among Mohawks, £10. Do. do. do. of shipment and sale of furs, in England, £7 2. Total of costs and charges, £20 19 1½, all in sterling money. Note, sale of furs, to Frost & Rich, net avails, £196 11 3. Balance, as per contra, £175 22 5½: a very satisfactory equivalent this, Master Cornelius, to appear on the books of Tongue & Twaddle, where I stand charged with the original investment of £20 19 1½! How much the Empress of Germany may pay the firm of Frost & Rich for the articles does not appear."

"Nor does it appear that more was got for your beads, in the Mohawk country, than they were valued at there, or was paid for the skins than they were worth where they were produced."

"Whe-w-w-w!" whistled the merchant as he returned the tablets to his pocket.

"One would think that thou hadst been studying the Leyden pamphleteer, son of my old friend! If the savage thinks so little of his skins, and so much of my beads, I shall never take the pains to set him right; else, always by permission of the Board of Trade, we shall see him, one day, turning his bark canoe into a good ship and going in quest of his own ornaments. Enterprise and voyages! Who knows but that the rogue would see fit to stop at London, even; in which case the mother country might lose the profit of the sale at Vienna, and the Mohawk set up his carriage on the difference in the

value of markets! Thus, you see, in order to run a fair race, the horses must start even, carry equal weights, and, after all, one commonly wins. Your metaphysics are no better than so much philosophical gold leaf, which a cunning reasoner beats out into a sheet as large as the broadest American lake, to make dunces believe the earth can be transmitted into the precious material; while a plain, practical man puts the value of the metal into his pocket in good current coin."

"And yet I hear you complain that Parliament has legislated more than is good for trade, and speak in a manner of the proceedings at home, that, you will excuse me for saying, would better become a Hollander than a subject of the crown."

"Have I not told you, that the horse will run faster without the rider than with a pack-saddle on his back? Give your own jockey as little, and your adversary's as much weight as you can, if you wish to win. I complain of the borough-men, because they make laws for us, and not for themselves. As I often tell my worthy friend, Alderman Gulp, eating is good for life, but the surfeit makes a will necessary."

"From all which I infer, that the opinions of your Leyden correspondent are not those of Mr. Van Beverout."

The Alderman laid a finger on his nose, and looked at his companions, for a moment, without answering.

"Those Leydeners are a sagacious breed! If the United Provinces had but ground to stand on, they would, like the philosopher who boasted of his lever, move the world! The sly rogues think that the Amsterdammers have naturally an easy seat, and they wish to persuade all others to ride bare-back. I shall send a pamphlet up into the Indian country, and pay some scholar to have it translated into the Mohawk tongue, in order that the famous chief Schendoh, when the missionaries shall have taught him to read, may entertain right views of equivalents! I am not certain that I may not make the worthy divines a present to help the good fruits to ripen."

The Alderman leered round upon his auditors, and folding his hands meekly on his breast, he appeared to leave his eloquence to work its own effects.

"These opinions favor but little the occupation of the—the gentleman—who now honors us with his company," said Ludlow, regarding the gay-looking smuggler with an eye that showed how much he was embarrassed to find a suitable appellation for one whose appearance was so much at variance with his pursuits. "If restrictions are necessary to commerce, the lawless trader is surely left without an excuse for his calling."

"I as much admire your discretion in practice, as the justice of your sentiments in theory, Captain Ludlow," returned the Alderman. "In a rencontre on the high seas, it would be your duty to render captive the brigantine of this person; but, in what may be called the privacy of domestic retirement, you are content to ease your mind in moralities! I feel it my duty, too, to speak on this point, and shall take so favorable an occasion, when all is pacific, to disburden myself of some sentiments that suggest themselves very naturally under the circumstances." Myndert then turned himself toward the dealer in contraband, and continued, much in the manner of a city magistrate reading a lesson of propriety to some disturber of the peace of society. "You appear here, Master Seadrift," he said, "under what, to borrow a figure from your profession, may be called false colors. You bear the countenance of one who might be a useful subject, and yet you are suspected of being addicted to certain practices which—I will not say they are dishonest or even discreditable, for on that head the opinions of men are much divided—but which certainly have no tendency to assist her Majesty in bringing her wars to a glorious issue, by securing to her European dominions that monopoly of trade, by which it is her greatest desire to ease us of the colonies of looking any farther after our particular interests, than beyond the doors of her own custom-houses. This is an indiscretion, to give the act its gentlest appellation; and I regret to add, it is accom-

panied by certain circumstances which rather heighten than lessen the delinquency."

The Alderman paused a moment to observe the effect of his admonition, and to judge, by the eye of the freetrader, how much farther he might push his artifice; but perceiving, to his own surprise, that the other bent his face to the floor, and stood like one rebuked, he took courage to proceed. "You have introduced into this portion of my dwelling, which is exclusively inhabited by my niece, who is neither of a sex nor of years to be legally arraigned of any oversight of this nature, sundries of which it is the pleasure of the Queen's advisers that her subjects in the colonies should not know the use, since, in the nature of fabrications, they cannot be submitted to the supervising care of the ingenious artisans of the mother island. Woman, Master Seadrift, is a creature liable to the influence of temptation, and in few things is she weaker than in her efforts to resist the allurements of articles which may aid in adorning her person. My niece, the daughter of Etienne Barberie, may also have an hereditary weakness on this head, since the females of France study these inventions more than those of some other countries. It is not my intention, however, to manifest any unreasonable severity; since, if old Etienne has communicated any hereditary feebleness on the subject of fancy, he has also left his daughter the means of paying for it. Hand in your account, therefore, and the debt shall be discharged, if debt has been incurred. And this brings me to the last and the gravest of your offenses.

"Capital is no doubt the foundation on which a merchant builds his edifice of character," continued Myndert, after taking another jealous survey of the countenance of him he addressed; "the credit is the ornament of its front. This is a corner-stone; that the pilasters and carvings by which the building is rendered pleasant; sometimes, when age has undermined the basement, it is the columns on which the superstructure rests, or even the roof by which the occupant is sheltered. It renders the rich man safe, the dealer of moderate means active and respectable, and it causes even the poor man to hold up his head in hope, though I admit that buyer and seller need both be wary, when it stands unsupported by any substantial base. This being the value of credit, Master Seadrift, none should assail it without sufficient cause, for its quality is of a nature too tender for rude treatment. I learned, when a youth, in my travels in Holland, through which country, by means of the Trekschuyts, I passed with sufficient deliberation to profit by what was seen, the importance of avoiding, on all occasions, bringing credit into disrepute. As one event that occurred offers an apposite parallel to what I have now to advance, I shall make a tender of the facts in the way of illustration. The circumstances show the awful uncertainty of things in this transitory life, Captain Ludlow, and forewarn the most vigorous and youthful, that the strong arm may be cut down in his pride, like the tender plant of the fields! The banking-house of Van Gelt and Van Stopper, in Amsterdam, had dealt largely in securities issued by the Emperor for the support of his wars. It happened, at the time, that fortune had favored the Ottoman, who was then pressing the city of Belgrade with some prospects of success. Well, sirs, a headstrong and ill-advised laundress had taken possession of an elevated terrace in the center of the town, in order to dry her clothes. This woman was in the act of commencing the distribution of her muslins and linens, with the break of day, when the Mussulmans awoke the garrison by a rude assault. Some, who had been posted in a position that permitted of retreat, having seen certain bundles of crimson, and green, and yellow, on an elevated parapet, mistook them for the heads of so many Turks; and they spread the report, far and near, that a countless band of the Infidels, led on by a vast number of sherriffes in green turbans, had gained the heart of the place, before they were induced to retire.

"The rumor soon took the shape of a circumstantial detail, and, having reached Amsterdam, it caused the funds of the

Imperialists to look down. There was much question, on the Exchange, concerning the probable loss of Van Gelt and Van Stopper in consequence. Just as speculation was at its greatest height on this head, the monkey of a Savoyard escaped from its string, and concealed itself in a nut shop, a few doors distant from the banking house of the firm, where a crowd of Jew boys collected to witness its antics. Men of reflection, seeing what they mistook for a demonstration on the part of the children of the Israelites, began to feel uneasiness for their own property. Drafts multiplied: and the worthy bankers, in order to prove their solidity, disdained to shut their doors at the usual hour. Money was paid throughout the night; and before noon on the following day Van Gelt had cut his throat, in a summer-house that stood on the banks of the Utrecht Canal; and Van Stopper was seen smoking a pipe, among strong boxes that were entirely empty. At two o'clock, the post brought the intelligence that the Mussulmans were repulsed, and that the laundress was hanged; though I never knew exactly for what crime, as she certainly was not a debtor of the unhappy firm. These are some of the warning events of life, gentlemen; and as I feel sure of addressing those who are capable of making the application, I shall now conclude by advising all who hear me to great discretion of speech on every matter connected with commercial character."

When Myndert ceased speaking, he threw another glance around him, in order to note the effect his words had produced, and more particularly to ascertain whether he had not drawn a draft on the forbearance of the freetrader which might still meet with a protest. He was at a loss to account for the marked and unusual deference with which he was treated, by one who, while he was never coarse, seldom exhibited much complaisance for the opinions of a man he was in the habit of meeting so familiarly on matters of pecuniary interest. During the whole of the foregoing harangue, the young mariner of the brigantine had maintained the same attitude of modest attention; and when his eyes were permitted to rise, it was only to steal uneasy looks at the face of Alida. La belle Barberie had also listened to her uncle's eloquence with a more thoughtful air than common. She met the occasional glances of the dealer in contraband with answering sympathy; and, in short, the most indifferent observer of their deportment might have seen that circumstances had created between them a confidence and intelligence which, if it were not absolutely of the most tender, was unequivocally of the most intimate character. All this Ludlow plainly saw, though the burgher had been too much engrossed with the ideas he had so complacently dealt out to note the fact.

"Now that my mind is so well stored with maxims on commerce, which I shall esteem as so many commentaries on the instructions of my Lords of the Admiralty," observed the Captain, after a brief interval of silence, "it may be permitted to turn our attention to things less metaphysical. The present occasion is favorable to inquire after the fate of the shipmate we lost in the last cruise; and it ought by no means to be neglected."

"You speak truth, Mr. Cornelius. The Patroon of Kinderhook is not a man to fall into the sea, like an anker of forbidden liquor, and no questions asked. Leave this matter to my discretion, sir; and trust me, the tenants of the third best estate in the colony shall not long be without tidings of their landlord. If you will accompany Master Seadrift into the other part of the villa for a reasonable time, I shall possess myself of all the facts that are at all pertinent to the right understanding of the case."

The commander of the royal cruiser, and the young mariner of the brigantine, appeared to think that a compliance with this invitation would bring about a singular association. The hesitation of the latter, however, was far the most visible, since Ludlow had coolly determined to maintain his neutral character until a proper moment to act, as a faithful servitor of his royal mistress, should arrive.

He knew, or firmly believed, that the *Water-Witch* again lay in the Cove, concealed by the shadows of the surrounding

wood; and as he had once before suffered by the superior address of the smugglers, he was now resolved to act with so much caution as to enable him to return to his ship in time to proceed against her with decision, and, as he hoped, with effect. In addition to this motive for artifice, there was that in the manner and language of the contraband dealer to place him altogether above the ordinary men of his pursuit, and indeed to create in his favor a certain degree of interest, which the officer of the crown was compelled to admit. He therefore bowed with sufficient courtesy, and professed his readiness to follow the suggestions of the Alderman.

"We have met on neutral ground, Master Seadrift," said Ludlow to his gay companion, as they quitted the saloon of la Cour des Fees; "and though bent on different objects, we may discourse amicably on the past. The Skimmer of the Seas has a reputation, in his way, that almost raises him to the level of a seaman distinguished in a better service. I will ever testify to his skill and coolness as a mariner, however much I may lament that those fine qualities have received so unhappy a direction."

"This is speaking with a becoming reservation for the rights of the Crown, and with meet respect for the Barons of the Exchequer," retorted Seadrift, whose former, and we may say natural, spirit seemed to return, as he left the presence of the burgher. "We follow the pursuit, Captain Ludlow, in which accident has cast our fortunes. You serve a Queen you never saw, and a nation who will use you in her need and despise you in her prosperity; and I serve myself. Let reason decide between us."

"I admire this frankness, sir, and have hopes of a better understanding between us, now that you have done with the mystifications of your sea-green woman. The farce has been well enacted; though, with the exception of Oloff Van Staats and those enlightened spirits you lead about the ocean, it has not made many converts to necromancy."

The freetrader permitted his handsome mouth to relax in a smile.

"We have our mistress, too," he said; "but she exacts no tribute. All that is gained goes to enrich her subjects, while all that she knows is cheerfully imparted for their use. If we are obedient, it is because we have experienced her justice and wisdom. I hope Queen Anne deals as kindly by these who risk life and limb in her cause?"

"Is it part of the policy of her you follow to reveal the fate of the Patroon? for, though rivals in one dear object—or rather I should say, once rivals in that object—I cannot see a guest quit my ship with so little ceremony without an interest in his welfare."

"You make a just distinction," returned Seadrift, smiling still more meaningly; "once rivals is indeed the better expression. Mr. Van Staats is a brave man, however ignorant he may be of the seaman's art. One who has shown so much spirit will be certain of protection from personal injury in the care of the Skimmer of the Seas."

"I do not constitute myself the keeper of Mr. Van Staats; still, as the commander of the ship whence he has been —what shall I term the manner of his abduction?—for I would not willingly use, at this moment, a term that may prove disagreeable——"

"Speak freely, sir, and fear not to offend. We of the brigantine are accustomed to divers epithets that might startle less practiced ears. We are not to learn, at this late hour, that in order to become respectable, roguery must have the sanction of government. You were pleased, Captain Ludlow, to name the mystifications of the Water-Witch; but you seem indifferent to those that are hourly practiced near you in the world, and which, without the pleasantry of this of ours, have not half its innocence."

"There is little novelty in the expedient of seeking to justify the delinquency of individuals by the failings of society."

"I confess it is rather just than original. Triteness and truth appear to be sisters! And yet do we find ourselves driven to this apology, since the refine-

ment of us of the brigantine has not yet attained to the point of understanding all the excellence of novelty in morals."

"I believe there is a mandate of sufficient antiquity, which bids us to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."

"A mandate which our modern Cæsars have most liberally construed! I am a poor casuist, sir; nor do I think the loyal commander of the *Coquette* would wish to uphold all that sophistry can invent on such a subject. If we begin with potentates, for instance, we shall find the Most Christian King bent on appropriating as many of his neighbors' goods to his own use, as ambition, under the name of glory, can covet; the Most Catholic, covering with the mantle of his Catholicity a greater multitude of enormities, on this very continent, than even charity itself could conceal; and our own gracious sovereign, whose virtues and whose mildness are celebrated in verse and in prose, causing rivers of blood to run, in order that the little island over which she rules may swell out, like the frog in the fable, to dimensions that Nature has denied, and which will one day inflict the unfortunate death that befell the ambitious inhabitant of the pool. The gallows awaits the pickpocket; but your robber under a pennant is dubbed a knight! The man who amasses wealth by gainful industry is ashamed of his origin; while he who has stolen from churches, laid villages under contribution, and cut throats by thousands, to divide the spoils of a galleon or a military chest, has gained gold on the highway to glory! Europe has reached an exceeding pass of civilization, it may not be denied; but before society inflicts so severe censure on the acts of individuals, notwithstanding the triteness of the opinion, I must say it is bound to look more closely to the example it sets, in its collective character."

"These are points on which our difference of opinion is likely to be lasting," said Ludlow, assuming the severe air of one who had the world on his side. "We will defer the discussion to a moment of greater leisure, sir. Am I to learn more of Mr. Van Staats, or is the question of his fate to become the subject of a serious official inquiry?"

"The Patroon of Kinderhook is a bold boarder!" returned the freetrader, laughing. "He has carried the residence of the lady of the brigantine by a coup-de-main; and he reposes on his laurels! We of the contraband are merrier in our privacy than is thought, and those who join our mess seldom wish to quit it."

"There may be occasion to look farther into its mysteries—until when, I wish you adieu."

"Hold!" gayly cried the other, observing that Ludlow was about to quit the room, "let the time of uncertainty be short, I pray thee. Our mistress is like the insect which takes the color of the leaf on which it dwells. You have seen her in her sea-green robe, which she never fails to wear when roving over the soundings of your American coast; but in the deep waters her mantle vies with the blue of the ocean depths. Symptoms of a change, which always denote an intended excursion far beyond the influence of the land, have been seen."

"Harkee, Master Seadrift! This foolery may do, while you possess the power to maintain it. But remember, that though the law only punishes the illegal trader by confiscation of his goods when taken, it punishes the kidnapper with personal pains, and sometimes with—death! And more—remember that the line which divides smuggling from piracy is easily passed, while the return becomes impossible."

"For this generous counsel, in my mistress's name, I thank thee," the gay mariner replied, bowing with a gravity that rather heightened than concealed his irony. "Your *Coquette* is broad in the reach of her booms, and swift on the water, Captain Ludlow; but let her be capricious, willful, deceitful, nay powerful, as she may, she shall find a woman in the brigantine equal to all her arts, and far superior to all her threats!"

With this prophetic warning on the part of the Queen's officer, and cool reply on that of the dealer in contraband, the two

sailors separated. The latter took a book and threw himself into a chair, with a well-maintained indifference; while the other left the house, in a haste that was not disguised.

In the meantime, the interview between Alderman Van Beverout and his niece still continued. Minute passed after minute, yet there was no summons to the pavilion. The gay young seaman of the brigantine had continued his studies for some time after the disappearance of Ludlow, and he now evidently awaited an intimation that his presence was required in la Cour des Fees. During these moments of anxiety, the air of the freetrader was sorrowful rather than impatient; and when a footstep was heard at the door of the room, he betrayed symptoms of strong and uncontrollable agitation. It was the female attendant of Alida, who entered, presented a slip of paper, and retired. The eager expectant read the following words, hastily written in pencil:

"I have evaded all his questions, and he is more than half disposed to believe in necromancy. This is not the moment to confess the truth, for he is not in a condition to hear it, being already much disturbed by the uncertainty of what may follow the appearance of the brigantine on the coast, and so near his own villa. But, be assured, he shall and will acknowledge claims that I know how to support, and which, should I fail of establishing, he would not dare to refuse to the redoubtable Skimmer of the Seas. Come hither, the moment you hear his foot in the passage."

The last injunction was soon obeyed. The Alderman entered by one door as the active fugitive retreated by another; and where the weary burgher expected to see his guests, he found an empty apartment. This last circumstance, however, gave Myndert Van Beverout but little surprise and no concern, as would appear by the indifference with which he noted the circumstance.

"Vagaries and womanhood!" thought rather than muttered the Alderman. "The jade turns like a fox in his track, and it would be easier to convict a merchant who values his reputation, to a false invoice, than this minx of nineteen of an indiscretion! There is so much of old Etienne and his Norman blood in her eye that one does not like to provoke extremities; but here, when I expected Van Staats had profited by his opportunity, the girl looks like a nun at the mention of his name. The Patroon is no Cupid, we must allow; or, in a week at sea, he would have won the heart of a mermaid! Aye—and here are more perplexities by the return of the Skimmer and his brig, and the notions that young Ludlow has of his duty. Life and morality! One must quit trade at some time or other, and begin to close the books. I must seriously think of striking a final balance. If the sum total was a little more in my favor, it should be done to-morrow!"

CHAPTER XXV.

"Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphosed me;
Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,
War with good counsel, set the world at naught.'
—TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

LUDLOW quitted the Lust in Rust with a wavering purpose. Throughout the whole of the preceding interview he had jealously watched the eye and features of la belle Barberie; and he had not failed to draw his conclusions from a mien that too plainly expressed a deep interest in the freetrader. For a time, only, had he been induced, by the calmness and self-possession with which she received her uncle and himself, to believe that she had not visited the *Water-Witch* at all; but when the gay and reckless being who governed the movements of that extraordinary vessel appeared, he could no longer flatter himself with this hope. He now believed that her choice for life had been made; and while he deplored the infatuation which could induce so gifted a woman to forget her station and character, he was himself too frank not to see that the individual who had in so short a time gained this ascendency over the feelings of Alida, was, in many respects, fitted to exercise a powerful influence over the

imagination of a youthful and secluded female.

There was a struggle in the mind of the young commander between his duty and his feelings. Remembering the artifice by which he had formerly fallen into the power of the smugglers, he had taken his precaution so well in the present visit to the villa, that he firmly believed he had the person of his lawless rival at his mercy. To avail himself of this advantage, or to retire and leave him in possession of his mistress and his liberty, was the point mooted in his thoughts. Though direct and simple in his habits, like most of the seamen of that age, Ludlow had all the loftier sentiments that become a gentleman. He felt keenly for Alida, and he shrank, with sensitive pride, from incurring the imputation of having acted under the impulse of disappointment. To these motives of forbearance, was also to be added the inherent reluctance which, as an officer of rank, he felt to the degradation of being employed in a duty that more properly belongs to men of less elevated ambition. He looked on himself as a defender of the rights and glory of his sovereign, and not as a mercenary instrument of those who collected her customs; and though he would not have hesitated to incur any rational hazard, in capturing the vessel of the smuggler, or in making captives of all or any of her crew on their proper element, he disliked the appearance of seeking a solitary individual on the land. In addition to this feeling, there was his own pledge that he met the proscribed dealer in contraband on neutral ground. Still the officer of the Queen had his orders, and he could not shut his eyes to the general obligations of duty. The brigantine was known to inflict so much loss on the revenue of the crown, more particularly in the other hemisphere, that an especial order had been issued by the Admiral of the station for her capture. Here then was an opportunity of depriving the vessel of that master spirit which, notwithstanding the excellence of its construction, had alone so long enabled it to run the gauntlet of a hundred cruisers with impunity. Agitated by these contending feelings and reflections, the young sailor left the door of the villa, and came upon its little lawn, in order to reflect with less interruption, and, indeed, to breathe more freely.

The night had advanced into the first watch of the seaman. The shadow of the mountain, however, still covered the grounds of the villa, the river, and the shores of the Atlantic, with a darkness that was deeper than the obscurity which dimmed the surface of the rolling ocean beyond. Objects were so indistinct as to require close and steady looks to ascertain their character, while the setting of the scene might be faintly traced by its hazy and indistinct outlines. The curtains of la Cour des Fees had been drawn, and, though the lights were shining within, the eye could not penetrate the pavilion. Ludlow gazed about him, and held his way reluctantly toward the water.

In endeavoring to conceal the interior of her apartment from the eyes of those without, Alida had suffered a corner of the drapery to remain open. When Ludlow reached the gate that led to the landing, he turned to take a last look at the villa; and, favored by his new position, he caught a glimpse, through the opening, of the person of her who was still uppermost in his thoughts.

La belle Barberie was seated at the little table by whose side she had been found earlier in the evening. An elbow rested on the precious wood, and one fair hand supported a brow that was thoughtful beyond the usual character of its expression, if not melancholy. The commander of the *Coquette* felt the blood rushing to his heart, for he fancied that the beautiful and pensive countenance was that of a penitent. It is probable that the idea quickened his drooping hopes; for Ludlow believed it might not yet be too late to rescue the woman he so sincerely loved, from the precipice over which she was suspended. The seemingly irretrievable step already taken was forgotten; and the generous young sailor was about to rush back to la Cour des Fees, to implore its mistress to be

just to herself, when the hand fell from her polished brow, and Alida raised her face, with a look which denoted that she was no longer alone. The Captain drew back to watch the issue.

When Alida lifted her eyes, it was in kindness and with that frank ingenuousness with which an unperverted female greets the countenance of those who have her confidence. She smiled, though still in sadness rather than in pleasure; and she spoke, but the distance prevented her words from being audible. At the next instant Seadrift moved into the space visible through the half-drawn drapery, and took her hand. Alida made no effort to withdraw; but, on the contrary, she looked up into his face with still less equivocal interest, and appeared to listen to his voice with an absorbed attention. The gate swung violently open, and Ludlow had reached the margin of the river before he again paused.

The barge of the *Coquette* was found where her commander had ordered his people to lie concealed, and he was about to enter it, when the noise of the little gate, again shutting with the wind, induced him to cast a look behind. A human form was distinctly to be seen, against the light walls of the villa, decending toward the river. The men were commanded to keep close, and, withdrawing within the shadow of a fence, the Captain waited the approach of the new-comer.

As the unknown person passed, Ludlow recognized the agile form of the freetrader. The latter advanced to the margin of the river, and gazed warily about him for several minutes. A low but distinct note, on a common ship's call, was then heard. The summons was soon succeeded by the appearance of a small skiff, which glided out of the grass on the opposite side of the stream, and approached the spot where Seadrift awaited its arrival. The freetrader sprang lightly into the little boat, which immediately began to glide out of the river. As the skiff passed the spot where he stood, Ludlow saw that it was pulled by a single seaman; and, as his own boat was manned by six lusty rowers, he felt that the person of the man whom he so much envied was at length fairly and honorably in his power. We shall not attempt to analyze the emotion that was ascendant in the mind of the young officer. It is enough for our purpose to add that he was soon in his boat and in full pursuit.

As the course to be taken by the barge was diagonal rather than direct, a few powerful strokes of the oars brought it so near the skiff that Ludlow, by placing his hand on the gunwale of the latter, could arrest its progress.

"Though so lightly equipped, fortune favors you less in boats than in larger craft, Master Seadrift," said Ludlow, when, by virtue of a strong arm, he had drawn his prize so near as to find himself seated within a few feet of his prisoner. "We meet on our proper element, where there can be no neutrality between one of the contraband and a servant of the Queen."

The start, the half-repressed exclamation and the momentary silence showed that the captive had been taken completely by surprise.

"I admit your superior dexterity," he at length said, speaking low and not without agitation. "I am your prisoner, Captain Ludlow; and I would now wish to know your intentions in disposing of my person?"

"That is soon answered. You must be content to take the homely accommodations of the *Coquette* for the night, instead of the more luxurious cabin of your *Water-Witch*. What the authorities of the Province may decide to-morrow, it exceeds the knowledge of a poor commander in the navy to say."

"The Lord Cornbury has retired to——"

"A jail," said Ludlow, observing that the other spoke more like one who mused than like one who asked a question. "The kinsman of our gracious Queen speculates on the chances of human fortune within the walls of a prison. His successor, the Brigadier Hunter, is thought to have less sympathy for the moral infirmities of human nature!"

"We deal lightly with dignities," exclaimed the captive with his former gayety

of tone and manner. "You have your revenge for some personal liberties that were certainly taken not a fortnight since with this boat and her crew; still, I much mistake your character if unnecessary severity forms one of its features. May I communicate with the brigantine?"

"Freely—when she is once in the care of a Queen's officer."

"Oh, sir, you disparage the qualities of my mistress, in supposing there exists a parallel with your own! The *Water-Witch* will go at large till a far different personage shall become your captive. May I communicate with the shore?"

"To that there exists no objection—if you will point out the means."

"I have one here who will prove a faithful messenger."

"Too faithful to the delusion which governs all your followers. Your man must be your companion in the *Coquette*, Master Seadrift, though," and Ludlow spoke in melancholy, "if there be any on the land who take so near an interest in your welfare as to find more sorrow in uncertainty than in the truth, one of my own crew, in any of whom confidence may be placed, shall do your errand."

"Let it be so," returned the freetrader, as if satisfied that he could, in reason, expect no more. "Take this ring to the lady of yonder dwelling," he continued, when Ludlow had selected the messenger, "and say that he who sends it is about to visit the cruiser of Queen Anne in company with her commander. Should there be any question of the motive, you can speak to the manner of my arrest."

"And, mark me, fellow!" added his captain; "that duty done, look to the idlers on the shore, and see that no boat quits the river to apprise the smugglers of their loss."

The man, who was armed in the fashion of a seaman on boat duty, received these orders with the customary deference; and the barge having drawn to the shore for that purpose, he landed.

"And now, Master Seadrift, having thus far complied with your wishes, I may expect you will not be deaf to mine. Here is a seat at your service in my barge, and I confess it will please me to see it occupied."

As the Captain spoke, he reached forth an arm, partly in natural complaisance, and partly with a carelessness that denoted some consciousness of the difference in their rank, both to aid the other to comply with his request, and, at need, to enforce it. But the freetrader seemed to repel the familiarity; for he drew back, at first, like one who shrank sensitively from the contact, and then, without touching the arm that was extended with a purpose so equivocal, he passed lightly from the skiff into the barge, declining assistance. The movement was scarcely made, before Ludlow quitted the latter, and occupied the place which Seadrift had just vacated. He commanded one of his men to exchange with the seaman of the brigantine; and, having made these preparations, he again addressed his prisoner.

"I commit you to the care of my cockswain and these worthy tars, Master Seadrift. We shall steer different ways. You will take possession of my cabin, where all will be at your disposal; ere the middle watch is called, I shall be there to prevent the pennant from coming down, and your sea-green flag turning the people's heads from their allegiance."

Ludlow then whispered his orders to his cockswain, and they separated. The barge proceeded to the mouth of the river, with the long and stately sweep of the oars that marks the progress of a man-of-war's boat; while the skiff followed noiselessly, and, aided by its color and dimensions, nearly invisible.

When the two boats entered the waters of the bay, the barge held on its course toward the distant ship; while the skiff inclined to the right, and steered directly for the bottom of the Cove. The precaution of the dealer in contraband had provided his little boat with muffled sculls; and Ludlow, when he was enabled to discover the fine tracery of the lofty and light spars of the *Water-Witch*, as they rose above the tops of the drawf trees that lined the shore, had no reason to think his approach was known. Once

assured of the presence and position of the brigantine, he was enabled to make his advances with all the caution that might be necessary.

Some ten or fifteen minutes were required to bring the skiff beneath the bowsprit of the beautiful craft, without giving the alarm to those who doubtless were watching on her decks. The success of our adventurer, however, appeared to be complete; for he was soon holding by the cable, and not the smallest sound of any kind had been heard in the brigantine. Ludlow now regretted he had not entered the Cove with his barge; for, so profound and unsuspecting was the quiet of the vessel, that he doubted not his ability to have carried her by a coup-de-main. Vexed by his oversight, and incited by the prospects of success, he began to devise those expedients which would naturally suggest themselves to a seaman in his situation.

The wind was southerly, and, though not strong, it was charged with the dampness and heaviness of the night air. As the brigantine lay protected from the influence of the tides, she obeyed the currents of the other element; and, while her bows looked outward, her stern pointed toward the bottom of the basin. The distance from the land was not fifty fathoms, and Ludlow did not fail to perceive that the vessel rode by a kedge, and that her anchors, of which there was a good provision, were all snugly stowed. These facts induced the hope that he might separate the hawser that alone held the brigantine, which in the event of his succeeding, he had every reason to believe would drift ashore, before the alarm could be given to her crew, sail set, or an anchor let go. Although neither he nor his companion possessed any other implement to effect this object than the large seaman's knife of the latter, the temptation was too great not to make the trial. The project was flattering; for, though the vessel in that situation would receive no serious injury, the unavoidable delay of heaving off the sands would enable his boats, and perhaps the ship herself, to reach the place in time to secure their prize. The bargeman was asked for his knife, and Ludlow himself made the first cut upon the solid and difficult mass. The steel had no sooner touched the compact yarns, than a dazzling glare of light shot into the face of him who held it. Recovering from the shock and rubbing his eyes, our startled adventurer gazed upward with that consciousness of wrong which assails us when detected in any covert act, however laudable may be its motive; a sort of homage that Nature, under every circumstance, pays to loyal dealings.

Though Ludlow felt, at the instant of this interruption, that he stood in jeopardy of his life, the concern it awakened was momentarily lost in the spectacle before him. The bronzed and unearthly features of the image were brightly illumined; and, while her eyes looked on him steadily, as if watching his smallest movement, her malign and speaking smile appeared to turn his futile effort into scorn! There was no need to bid the seaman at the oars do his duty. No sooner did he catch the expression of that mysterious face, than the skiff whirled away from the spot, like a sea-fowl taking wing under alarm. Though Ludlow at each moment expected a shot, even the imminence of the danger did not prevent him from gazing, in absorbed attention, at the image. The light by which it was illumined, though condensed, powerful, and steadily cast, wavered a little, and exhibited her attire.

Then the Captain saw the truth of what Seadrift had asserted; for by some process of the machine into which he had not the leisure to inquire, the sea-green mantle had been changed for a slighter robe of the azure of the deep waters. As if satisfied with having betrayed the intention of the sorceress to depart, the light immediately vanished.

"This mummery is well maintained!" muttered Ludlow, when the skiff had reached a distance that assured him of safety. "Here is a symptom that the Rover means soon to quit the coast. The change of dress is some signal to his superstitious and deluded crew. It is my task to disappoint his mistress, as he terms

her, though it must be confessed that she does not sleep at her post."

During the ten succeeding minutes our foiled adventurer had leisure, no less than motive, to feel how necessary is success to any project whose means admit of dispute. Had the hawser been cut and the brigantine stranded, it is probable that the undertaking of the Captain would have been accounted among those happy expedients which, in all pursuits, are thought to distinguish the mental efforts of men particularly gifted by nature; while, under the actual circumstances, he who would have reaped all the credit of so felicitous an idea was mentally chafing with the apprehension that his unlucky design might become known. His companion was no other than Robert Yarn, the fore-topman, who, on a former occasion, had been heard to affirm that he had already enjoyed so singular a view of the lady of the brigantine, while assisting to furl the fore-topsail of the *Coquette*.

"This has been a false board, Master Yarn," observed the Captain, when the skiff was past the entrance of the Cove, and some distance down the bay; "for the credit of our cruise, we will not enter the occurrence in the log. You understand me, sir; I trust a word is sufficient for so shrewd a wit?"

"I hope I know my duty, your honor, which is to obey orders, though it may break owners," returned the topman. "Cutting a hawser with a knife is but slow work in the best of times; but though one who has little right to speak in the presence of a gentleman so well taught, it is my opinion that the steel is not yet sharpened which is to part any rope aboard yon rover, without the consent of the black-looking woman under her bowsprit."

"And what is the opinion of the berth-deck concerning this strange brigantine that we have so long been following without success?"

"That we shall follow her till the last biscuit is eaten, and the scuttle-butt shall be dry, with no better fortune. It is not my business to teach your honor, but there is not a man in the ship who ever expects to be a farthing the better for her capture. Men are of many minds concerning the Skimmer of the Seas; but all are agreed that unless aided by some uncommon luck, which may amount to the same thing as being helped by him who seldom lends a hand to any honest undertaking, he is altogether such a seaman as another like him does not sail the ocean!"

"I am sorry that my people should have reason to think so meanly of our own skill. The ship has not yet had a fair chance. Give her an open sea, and a capful of wind, and she ll defy all the black women that the brigantine can stow. As to your Skimmer of the Seas, be he man or devil, he is our prisoner."

"And does your honor believe that the trim-built and light-sailing gentleman we overhauled in this skiff is in truth that renowned rover?" asked Yarn, resting on his sculls in the interest of the moment. "There are some on board the ship who maintain that the man in question is taller than the big tide-waiter at Plymouth, with a pair of shoulders——"

"I have reason to know they are mistaken. If we are more enlightened than our shipmates, Master Yarn, let us be close-mouthed, that others do not steal our knowledge—hold, here is a crown with the face of King Louis; he is our bitterest enemy, and you may swallow him whole, if you please, or take him in morsels, as shall best suit your humor. But remember that our cruise in the skiff is under secret orders, and the less we say about the anchor-watch of the brigantine the better."

Honest Bob took the piece of silver with a gusto that no opinions of the marvelous could diminish; and, touching his hat, he did not fail to make the usual protestations of discretion. That night the messmates of the fore-topman endeavored in vain to extract from him the particulars of his excursion with the Captain; though the direct answers to their home questions were only evaded by allusions so dark and ambiguous as to give to that superstitious feeling of the crew, which Ludlow had wished to lull, twice its original force.

Not long after this short dialogue, the

skiff reached the side of the *Coquette*. Her commander found his prisoner in possession of his own cabin, and, though grave if not sad in demeanor, perfectly self-possessed. His arrival had produced a deep effect on the officers and men, though, like Yarn, most of both classes refused to believe that the handsome and gayly-attired youth they had been summoned to receive was the notorious dealer in contraband.

Light observers of the forms under which human qualities are exhibited too often mistake their outward signs. Though it is quite in reason to believe that he who mingles much in rude and violent scenes should imbibe some of their rough and repelling aspects, still it would seem that, as stillest waters commonly conceal the deepest currents, so the powers to awaken extraordinary events are not unfrequently cloaked under a chastened and sometimes under a cold exterior. It has often happened, that the most desperate and self-willed men are those whose mien and manners would give reason to expect the mildest and most tractable dispositions; while he who has seemed a lion sometimes proves, in his real nature, to be little better than a lamb.

Ludlow had reason to see that the incredulity of his topman had extended to most on board; and, as he could not conquer his tenderness on the subject of Alida and all that concerned her, while on the other hand there existed no motive for immediately declaring the truth, he rather favored the general impression by his silence. First giving some orders of the last importance at that moment, he passed into the cabin, and sought a private interview with his captive.

"That vacant stateroom is at your service, Master Seadrift," he observed, pointing to the little apartment opposite to the one he occupied himself. "We are likely to be shipmates several days, unless you choose to shorten the time by entering into a capitulation for the *Water-Witch*, in which case——"

"You had a proposition to make."

Ludlow hesitated, cast an eye behind him, to be certain they were alone, and drew nearer to his captive.

"Sir, I will deal with you as becomes a seaman. La belle Barberie is dearer to me than ever woman was before; dearer, I fear, than ever woman will be again. You need not learn that circumstances have occurred—do you love the lady?"

"I do."

"And she—fear not to trust the secret to one who will not abuse the trust—returns she your affection?"

The mariner of the brigantine drew back with dignity; then, instantly recovering his ease, as if fearful he might forget himself, he said with warmth—

"This trifling with woman's weakness is the besetting sin of man! None may speak of her inclinations, Captain Ludlow, but herself. It never shall be said that any of the sex had aught but fitting reverence for their dependent state, their constant and confiding love, their faithfulness in all the world's trials, and their singleness of heart, from me."

"These sentiments do you honor; and I could wish, for your own sake, as well as that of others, there was less of contrariety in your character. One cannot but grieve——"

"You had a proposition for the brigantine?"

"I would have said, that were the vessel yielded without farther pursuit, means might be found to soften the blow to those who will otherwise be most wounded by her capture."

The face of the dealer in contraband had lost some of its usual brightness and animation; the color of the cheek was not as rich, and the eye was less at ease, than in his former interviews with Ludlow. But a smile of security crossed his fine features when the other spoke of the fate of the brigantine.

"The keel of the ship that is to capture the *Water-Witch* is not yet laid," he said firmly; "nor is the canvas that is to drive her through the water wove! Our mistress is not so heedless as to sleep when there is most occasion for her services."

"This mummery of a supernatural aid may be of use in holding the minds of the

ignorant beings who follow your fortunes in subjection, but it is lost when addressed to me. I have ascertained the position of the brigantine—nay, I have been under her very bowsprit, and so near her cutwater as to have examined her moorings. Measures are now taken to improve my knowledge, and to secure the prize."

The freetrader heard him without exhibiting alarm, though he listened with an attention that rendered his breathing audible.

"You found my people vigilant?" he rather carelessly observed than asked.

"So much so, that I have said the skiff was pulled beneath her martingale without a hail! Had there been means, it would not have required many moments to cut the hawser by which she rides, and to have laid your beauteous vessel ashore!"

The gleam of Seadrift's eye was like the glance of an eagle. It seemed to inquire, and to resent, in the same instant. Ludlow shrank from the piercing look, and reddened to the brow—whether with his recollections, or not, it is unnecessary to explain.

"The worthy device was thought of! nay, it was attempted!" exclaimed the other, gathering confirmation in the consciousness of his companion. "You did not—you could not succeed!"

"Our success will be proved in the result."

"The lady of the brigantine forgot not her charge! You saw her bright eye—her dark and meaning face! Light shone on that mysterious countenance — my words are true, Ludlow; thy tongue is silent, but that honest countenance confesses all!"

The gay dealer in contraband turned away, and laughed in his merriest manner.

"I knew it would be so," he continued; "what is the absence of one humble actor from her train! Trust me, you will find her coy as ever, and ill-disposed to hold converse with a cruiser who speaks so rudely through his cannon. Ha! here are auditors!"

An officer to announce the near approach of a boat entered. Both Ludlow and his prisoner started at this intelligence, and it was not difficult to fancy both believed that a message from the *Water-Witch* might be expected. The former hastened on deck; while the latter, notwithstanding a self-possession that was so much practiced, could not remain entirely at his ease. He passed into the stateroom, and it is more than probable that he availed himself of the window of its quarter-gallery to reconnoiter those who were so unexpectedly coming to the ship.

But after the usual hail and reply, Ludlow no longer anticipated any proposal from the brigantine. The answer had been what a seaman would call lubberly; or it wanted that Attic purity that men of the profession rarely fail to use on all occasions, and by the means of which they can tell a pretender to their mysteries with a quickness that is almost instinctive. When the short, quick "Boat-ahoy!" of the sentinel on the gangway was answered by the "What do you want?" of a startled respondent in the boat, it was received among the crew of the *Coquette* with such a sneer as the tyro, who has taken two steps in any particular branch of knowledge, is apt to bestow on the blunders of him who has taken but one.

A deep silence reigned, while a party consisting of two men and as many females mounted the side of the ship, leaving a sufficient number of forms behind them in the boat to man its oars. Notwithstanding more than one light was held in such a manner as would have discovered the faces of the strangers had they not all been closely muffled, the party passed into the cabin without recognition.

"Master Cornelius Ludlow, one might as well put on the Queen's livery at once as to be steering in this uncertain manner between the *Coquette* and the land, like a protested note sent from indorser to indorser to be paid," commenced Alderman Van Beverout, uncasing himself in the great cabin with the coolest deliberation, while his niece sank into a chair unbidden, her two attendants standing near in submissive silence. "Here is Alida, who has

insisted on paying so unseasonable a visit, and, what is worse still, on dragging me in her train, though I am past the day of following a woman about merely because she happens to have a pretty face. The hour is unseasonable, and as to the motive —why, if Master Seadrift has got a little out of his course, no great harm can come of it, while the affair is in the hands of so discreet and amiable an officer as yourself."

The Alderman became suddenly mute; for the door of the stateroom opened, and the individual he had named entered in person.

Ludlow needed no other explanation than the knowledge of the persons of his guests to understand the motive of their visit. Turning to Alderman Van Beverout, he said, with a bitterness he could not repress—

"My presence may be intrusive. Use the cabin as freely as your own house, and rest assured that while it is thus honored, it shall be sacred to its present uses. My duty calls me to the deck."

The young man bowed, and hurried from the place. As he passed Alida, he caught a gleam of her dark and eloquent eye, and he construed the glance into an expression of gratitude.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly."—MACBETH.

THE words of the immortal poet, with which, in deference to an ancient usage in the literature of the language, we have prefaced the incidents to be related in this chapter, are in perfect conformity with that governing maxim of a vessel, which is commonly embodied in its standing orders, and which prescribes the necessity of exertion and activity in the least of its operations. A strongly-manned ship, like a strong-armed man, is fond of showing its physical power, for it is one of the principal secrets of its efficiency. In a profession in which there is an unceasing contest with the wild and fickle winds, and in which human efforts are to be manifested in the control of a delicate and fearful machinery on an inconstant element, this governing principle becomes of the last importance. Where "delay may so easily be death," it soon gets to be a word that is expunged from the language; and there is perhaps no truth more necessary to be known to all young aspirants for naval success than that, while nothing should be attempted in a hurry, nothing should be done without the last degree of activity that is compatible with precision.

The commander of the *Coquette* had early been impressed with the truth of the foregoing rule, and he had not neglected its application in the discipline of his crew. When he reached the deck, therefore, after relinquishing the cabin to his visitors, he found those preparations which he had ordered to be commenced, when he first returned to the ship, already far advanced toward their execution. As these movements are closely connected with the future events it is our duty to explain, we shall relate them with some particularity.

Ludlow had no sooner given his orders to the officer in charge of the deck, than the call of the boatswain was heard summoning all hands to their duty. When the crew was collected, tackles were hooked to the large boats stowed in the center of the ship, and the whole of them were lowered into the water. The descent of those suspended on the quarters was of course less difficult and much sooner effected. So soon as all the boats with the exception of one at the stern, were out, the order was given to "cross topgallant yards." This duty had been commenced while other things had been in the course of performance, and a minute had scarcely passed before the upper masts were again in possession of their light sails. Then was heard the usual summons of "All hands up anchor, ahoy!" and the rapid orders of young officers to "man capstan-bar," to "nipper," and finally to "heave away." The business of getting the anchor on board a cruiser, and on board a ship engaged in commerce, is of very different degrees of labor, as well as of expedition. In the latter, a dozen men

apply their powers to a slow-moving and reluctant windlass, while the untractable cable as it enters is broken into coils by the painful efforts of a grumbling cook, thwarted perhaps, as much as he is aided, by the waywardness of some willful urchin who does the service of the cabin. On the other hand, the upright and constantly moving capstan knows no delay. The revolving "messenger" is ever ready to be applied, and skillful petty officers are always in the tiers, to dispose of the massive rope that it may not encumber the decks.

Ludlow appeared among his people while they were thus employed. Ere he had made one hasty turn on the quarter-deck, he was met by the busy first lieutenant.

"We are short, sir," said that agent of all work.

"Set your topsails."

The canvas was instantly permitted to fall, and it was no sooner stretched to the yards than force was applied to the halyard and the sails were hoisted.

"Which way, sir, do you wish the ship cast?" demanded the attentive Luff.

"To seaward."

The headyards were accordingly braced aback in the proper direction, and it was then reported to the Captain that all was ready to get the ship under way.

"Trip the anchor at once, sir; when it is stowed and the decks cleared, report to me."

This sententious and characteristic communication was sufficient for all the purposes of that moment. The one was accustomed to issue his orders without explanation, and the other never hesitated to obey, and rarely presumed to inquire into their motive.

"We are aweigh and stowed, sir; everything clear," said Mr. Luff, after a few minutes had been allowed to execute the preceding commands.

Ludlow then seemed to arouse himself from a deep reverie. He had hitherto spoken mechanically, rather than as one conscious of what he had uttered, or whose feelings had any connection with his words. But it was now necessary to mingle with his officers, and to issue mandates that, as they were less in routine, required both thought and discretion. The crews of the different boats were "called away," and arms were placed in their hands. When nearly or quite one-half of the ship's company were all reported to be ready, officers were assigned to each, and the particular service expected at their hands was distinctly explained.

A master's mate in the Captain's barge, with the crew strengthened by half a dozen marines, was ordered to pull directly for the Cove, into which he was to enter with muffled oars, and where he was to await a signal from the first lieutenant, unless he met the brigantine endeavoring to escape, in which case his orders were imperative to board and carry her at every hazard. The high-spirited youth no sooner received his charge than he quitted the ship and steered to the southward, keeping inside the tongue of land so often named.

Luff was then told to take command of the launch. With this heavy and strongly-manned boat he was ordered to proceed to the inlet, where he was to give the signal to the barge, and whence he was to go to the assistance of the latter so soon as he was assured the *Water-Witch* could not again escape by the secret passage.

The two cutters were intrusted to the command of the second lieutenant, with orders to pull into the broad passage between the end of the cape, or the "Hook," and that long, narrow island which stretches from the harbor of New York for more than forty leagues to the eastward, sheltering the whole coast of Connecticut from the tempests of the ocean. Ludlow knew, though ships of a heavy draught were obliged to pass close to the cape, in order to gain the open sea, that a light brigantine, like the *Water-Witch*, could find a sufficient depth of water for her purposes farther north. The cutters were, therefore, sent in that direction, with orders to cover as much of the channel as possible, and to carry the smuggler, should an occasion offer. Finally, the yawl was to occupy the space between the

two channels, with orders to repeat signals, and to be vigilant in reconnoitering.

While the different officers intrusted with these duties were receiving their instructions, the ship, under the charge of Trysail, began to move toward the cape. When off the point of the Hook, the two cutters and the yawl "cast off," and took to their oars, and when fairly without the buoys, the launch did the same, each boat taking its prescribed direction.

If the reader retains a distinct recollection of the scene described in one of the earlier pages of this work, he will understand the grounds on which Ludlow based his hopes of success. By sending the launch into the inlet, he believed he should inclose the brigantine on every side; since her escape through either of the ordinary channels would become impossible, while he kept the *Coquette* in the offing. The service he expected from the three boats sent to the northward was to trace the movement of the smuggler, and, should a suitable opportunity offer, to attempt to carry him by surprise.

When the launch parted from the ship, the *Coquette* came slowly up to the wind, and with her fore-topsail thrown to the mast, she lay, waiting to allow her boats the time necessary to reach their several stations. The different expeditions had reduced the force of the crew quite one-half, and as both the lieutenants were otherwise employed, there now remained on board no officer of a rank between those of the Captain and Trysail. Some time after the vessel had been stationary, and the men had been ordered to keep close, or in other words to dispose of their persons as they pleased, with a view to permit them to catch "cat's naps," as some compensation for the loss of their regular sleep, the latter approached his superior, who stood gazing over the hammock-cloths in the direction of the Cove, and spoke.

"A dark night, smooth water and fresh hands make boating agreeable duty!" he said. "The gentlemen are in fine heart, and full of young men's hopes; but he who lays that brigantine aboard, will, in my poor judgment, have more work to do than merely getting up her side. I was in the foremost boat that boarded a Spaniard in the Mona, last war; and though we went into her with light heels, some of us were brought out with broken heads. I think the fore-topgallant-mast has a better set, Captain Ludlow, since we gave the last pull at the rigging?"

"It stands well," returned his half-attentive commander. "Give it the other drag, if you think best."

"Just as you please, sir; 'tis all one to me. I care not if the mast is hove all of one side, like the hat on the head of a country buck; but when a thing is as it ought to be, reason would tell us to let it alone. Mr. Luff was of opinion, that by altering the slings of the main-yard, we should give a better set to the topsail sheets; but it was little that could be done with the stick aloft, and I am ready to pay her Majesty the difference between the wear of the sheets as they stand now, and as Mr. Luff would have them, out of my pocket, though it is often as empty as a parish church in which a fox-hunting parson preaches. I was present, once, when a real tally-ho was reading the service, and one of your godless squires got in the wake of a fox, with his hounds, within hail of the church-windows! The cries had some such effect on my roarer as a puff of wind would have on this ship; that is to say, he sprung his luff, and though he kept on muttering something I never knew what, his eyes were in the fields the whole time the pack was in view. But this wasn't the worst of it; for when he got fairly back to his work again, the wind had been blowing the leaves of his book about, and he plumped us into the middle of the marriage ceremony. I am no great lawyer, but there were those who said it was a godsend that half the young men in the parish weren't married to their own grandmothers!"

"I hope the match was agreeable to the family," said Ludlow, relieving one elbow by resting the weight of his head on the other.

"Why, as to that, I will not take upon me to say, since the clerk corrected the

parson's reckoning before the mischief was entirely done. There has been a little dispute between me and the first lieutenant, Captain Ludlow, concerning the trim of the ship. He maintains that we have got too much in forward of what he calls the center of gravity; and he is of opinion that had we been less by the head, the smuggler would never have had the heels of us in the chase; whereas, I invite any man to lay a craft on her water-line——"

"Show our light!" interrupted Ludlow. "Yonder goes the signal of the launch!"

Trysail ceased speaking, and stepping on a gun he began to gaze in the direction of the Cove. A lantern, or some other bright object, was leisurely raised three times, and as often hid from view. The signal came from under the land, and in a quarter that left no doubt of its object.

"So far, well," cried the Captain, quitting his stand, and turning, for the first time, with consciousness to his officer. "'Tis a sign that they are at the inlet, and that the offing is clear. I think, Master Trysail, we are now sure of our prize. Sweep the horizon thoroughly with the night-glass, and then we will close upon this boasted brigantine."

Both took glasses, and devoted several minutes to this duty. A careful examination of the margin of the sea, from the coast of New Jersey to that of Long Island, gave them reason to believe that nothing of any size was lying without the cape. The sky was more free from clouds to the eastward than under the land, and it was not difficult to make certain of this important fact. It gave them the assurance that the *Water-Witch* had not escaped by the secret passage, during the time lost in their own preparations.

"This is still well," continued Ludlow. "Now he cannot avoid us—show the triangle."

Three lights, disposed in the form just named, were then hoisted at the gaff-end of the *Coquette*. It was an order for the boats in the Cove to proceed. The signal was quickly answered from the launch, and a small rocket was seen sailing over the trees and shrubbery of the shore. All on board the *Coquette* listened intently, to catch some sound that should denote the tumult of an assault. Once Ludlow and Trysail thought the cheers of seamen came on the thick air of the night; and once, again, either fancy or their senses told them they heard the menacing hail which commanded the outlaws to submit. Many minutes of intense anxiety succeeded. The whole of the hammock-cloths on the side of the ship nearest to the land were lined with curious faces, though respect left Ludlow to the sole occupation of the short and light deck which covered the accommodations; whither he had ascended to command a more perfect view of the horizon.

"'Tis time to hear their musketry, or to see the signal of success!" said the young man to himself, so intently occupied by his interest as to be unconscious of having spoken.

"Have you forgotten to provide a signal for failure?" said one at his elbow.

"Ha! Master Seadrift—I would have spared you this spectacle."

"'Tis one too often witnessed to be singular. A life passed on the ocean has not left me ignorant of the effect of night, with view seaward, a dark coast, and a background of mountain!"

"You have confidence in him left in charge of your brigantine! I shall have faith in your sea-green lady myself, if he escape my boats this time."

"See! there is a token of her fortune," returned the other, pointing toward three lanterns that were shown at the inlet's mouth, and over which many lights were burned in rapid succession.

"'Tis of failure. Let the ship fall-off, and square away the yards! Round in, men, round in. We will run down to the entrance of the bay, Mr. Trysail. The knaves have been aided by their lucky star!"

Ludlow spoke with deep vexation in his tones, but always with the authority of a superior and the promptitude of a seaman. The motionless being, near him, maintained a profound silence. No exclamation of triumph escaped him, nor did he

open his lips either in pleasure or in surprise. It appeared as if confidence in his vessel rendered him as much superior to exultation as to apprehension.

"You look upon this exploit of your brigantine, Master Seadrift, as a thing of course," Ludlow observed, when his own ship was steering toward the extremity of the cape again. "Fortune has not deserted you yet; but with the land on three sides, and this ship and her boats on the fourth, I do not despair yet of prevailing over your bronzed goddess!"

"Our mistress never sleeps," returned the dealer in contraband, drawing a long breath, like one who had struggled long to repress his interest.

"Terms are still in your power. I shall not conceal that the commissioners of her Majesty's customs set so high a price on the possession of the *Water-Witch* as to embolden me to assume a responsibility from which I might on any other occasion shrink. Deliver the vessel, and I pledge you the honor of an officer that the crew shall land without question. Leave her to us, with empty decks and a swept hold, if you will—but leave the swift boat in our hands."

"The lady of the brigantine thinks otherwise. She wears her mantle of the deep waters, and, trust me, spite of all your nets, she will lead her followers beyond the offices of the lead, and far from soundings; aye, spite of all the navy of Queen Anne!"

"I hope that others may not repent this obstinacy! But this is no time to bandy words; the duty of the ship requires my presence."

Seadrift took the hint, and reluctantly retired to the cabin. As he left the poop, the moon rose above the line of water in the eastern board, and shed its light along the whole horizon. The crew of the *Coquette* were now enabled to see, with sufficient distinctness, from the sands of the Hook to the distance of many leagues to seaward. There no longer remained a doubt that the brigantine was still within the bay. Encouraged by this certainty, Ludlow endeavored to forget all motives of personal feeling, in the discharge of a duty that was getting to be more and more interesting, as the prospect of its successful accomplishment grew brighter.

It was not long before the *Coquette* reached the channel which forms the available mouth of the estuary. Here the ship was again brought to the wind, and men were sent upon the yards and all her more lofty spars, in order to overlook, by the dim and deceitful light, as much of the inner water as the eye could reach; while Ludlow, assisted by the master, was engaged in the same employment on the deck. Two or three midshipmen were included among the common herd aloft.

"There is nothing visible within," said the Captain, after a long and anxious search with a glass. "The shadow of the Jersey mountains prevents the sight in that direction, while the spars of a frigate might be confounded with the trees of Staten Island, here, in the northern board. Cross-jackyard, there!"

The shrill voice of a midshipman answered to the hail.

"What do you make within the Hook, sir?"

"Nothing visible. Our barge is pulling along the land, and the launch appears to be lying off the inlet; aye, here is the yawl resting on its oars without the Romer; but we can find nothing which even looks like the cutter in the range of Coney."

"Take another sweep of the glass more westward, and look well into the mouth of the Raritan; mark you anything in that quarter?"

"Ha! here is a speck on our lee quarter."

"What do you make of it?"

"Unless sight deceives me greatly, sir, there is a light boat pulling in for the ship, about three cables' length distant."

Ludlow raised his own glass, and swept the water in the direction named. After one or two unsuccessful trials, his eye caught the object; and as the moon had now some power, he was at no loss to distinguish its character. There was evidently a boat, and one that, by its movements, had a design of holding a communication with the cruiser.

The eye of a seaman is acute on his element, and his mind is quick in forming opinions on all things that properly appertain to his profession. Ludlow saw instantly, by the construction, that the boat was not one of those sent from the ship; that it approached in a direction which enabled it to avoid the *Coquette*, by keeping in a part of the bay where the water was not sufficiently deep to admit of her passage; and that its movements were so guarded as to denote great caution, while there was an evident wish to draw as near to the cruiser as prudence might render advisable. Taking a trumpet, he hailed in the well-known and customary manner.

The answer came up faintly against the air, but it was uttered with much practice in the implement and with an exceeding compass of voice.

"Aye, aye!" and, "A parley from the brigantine!" were the only words that were distinctly audible.

For a minute or two the young man paced the deck in silence. Then he suddenly commanded the only boat which the cruiser now possessed to be lowered and manned.

"Throw an ensign into the stern-sheets," he said, when these orders were executed; "and let there be arms beneath it. We will keep faith while faith is observed, but there are reasons for caution in this interview."

Trysail was directed to keep the ship stationary, and after giving to his subordinate private instructions of importance in the event of treachery, Ludlow went into the boat in person. A very few minutes sufficed to bring the jolly-boat and the stranger so near each other that the means of communication were both easy and sure. The men of the former were then commanded to cease rowing, and, raising his glass, the commander of the cruise took a more certain and minute survey of those who awaited his coming. The strange boat was dancing on the waves, like a light shell that floated so buoyantly as scarce to touch the element which sustained it, while four athletic men leaned on oars which lay ready to urge it ahead. In the stern-sheets stood a form whose attitude and mien could not readily be mistaken. In the admirable steadiness of the figure, the folded arms, the fine and manly proportions, and the attire, Ludlow recognized the mariner of the India-shawl. A wave of the hand induced him to venture nearer.

"What is asked of the royal cruiser?" demanded the Captain of the vessel named, when the two beats were as near each other as seemed expedient.

"Confidence!" was the calm reply. "Come nearer, Captain Ludlow; I am here with naked hands! Our conference need not be maintained with trumpets."

Ashamed that a boat belonging to a ship of war should betray doubts, the people of the yawl were ordered to go within reach of the oars.

"Well, sir, you have your wish. I have quitted my ship, and come to the parley, with the smallest of my boats."

"It is unnecessary to say what has been done with the others," returned Tiller, across the firm muscles of whose face there passed a smile that was scarcely perceptible. "You hunt us hard, sir, and give but little rest to the brigantine. But again you are foiled!"

"We have a harbinger of better fortune in a lucky blow that has been struck to-night."

"You are understood, sir; Master Seadrift has fallen into the hands of the Queen's servants—but take good heed! if injury, in word or deed, befall that youth, there live those who well know how to resent the wrong!"

"These are lofty expressions to come from a proscribed man; but we will overlook them in the motive. Your brigantine, Master Tiller, lost its master-spirit in the Skimmer of the Seas, and it may be wise to listen to the suggestions of moderation. If you are disposed to treat I am here with no disposition to extort."

"We meet in a suitable spirit then, for I come prepared to offer terms of ransom that Queen Anne, if she love her revenue, need not despise; but, as in duty to her Majesty, I will first listen to her royal pleasure."

"First, then, as a seaman, and one who is not ignorant of what a vessel can perform, let me direct your attention to the situation of the parties. I am certain that the *Water-Witch*, though for the moment concealed by the shadows of the hills, or favored, perhaps, by distance and the feebleness of this light, is in the waters of the bay. A force, against which she has no power of resistance, watches the inlet; you see the cruiser in readiness to meet her off the Hook. My boats are so stationed as to preclude the possibility of escape without sufficient notice by the northern channel; and, in short, the outlets are all closed to your passage. With the morning light we shall know your position and act accordingly."

"No chart can show the dangers of rocks and shoals more clearly! And to avoid these dangers——"

"Yield the brigantine and depart. Though outlawed we shall content ourselves with the possession of the remarkable vessel in which you do your mischief, and hope that, deprived of the means to err, you will return to better courses."

"With the prayers of the Church for our amendment! Now listen, Captain Ludlow, to what I offer. You have the person of one much loved by all who follow the lady of the sea-green mantle in your power; and we have a brigantine that does much injury to Queen Anne's supremacy in the waters of this hemisphere; yield you the captive and we promise to quit this coast, never to return."

"This were a worthy treaty, truly, for one whose habitation is not a mad-house! Relinquish my right over the principal doer of the evil and receive the unsupported pledge of a subordinate's word! Your happy fortune, Master Tiller, has troubled your reason. What I offer was offered because I would not drive an unfortunate and remarkable man like him we have to extremities, and—there may be other motives, but do not mistake my lenity. Should force become necessary to put your vessel into our hands, the law may view your offenses with a still harsher eye. Deeds which the lenity of our system now considers as venial may easily turn to crime!"

"I ought not to take your distrust as other than excusable," returned the smuggler, evidently suppressing a feeling of haughty and wounded pride. "The word of a freetrader should have little weight in the ears of a queen's officer. We have been trained in different schools, and the same objects are seen in different colors. Your proposal has been heard, and, with some thanks for its fair intentions, it is refused without a hope of acceptance. Our brigantine is, as you rightly think, a remarkable vessel! Her equal, sir, for beauty or speed floats not the ocean. By Heaven! I would sooner slight the smiles of the fairest woman that walks the earth than entertain a thought which should betray the interest I feel in that jewel of naval skill! You have seen her at many times, Captain Ludlow—in squalls and calms; with her wings abroad and her pinions shut; by day and night; near and far; fair and foul; and I ask you, with a seaman's frankness, is she not a toy to fill a seaman's heart?"

"I deny not the vessel's merits, nor her beauty—'tis a pity she bears no better reputation."

"I knew you could not withhold this praise! But I grow childish when there is question of that brigantine! Well, sir, each has been heard, and now comes the conclusion. I part with the apple of my eye, ere a stick of that lovely fabric is willingly deserted. Shall we make other ransom for the youth? What think you of a pledge in gold, to be forfeited should we forget our word?"

"You ask impossibilities. In treating thus at all I quit the path of proud authority, because, as has been said, there is that about the Skimmer of the Seas that raises him above the coarse herd who in common traffic against the law. The brigantine or nothing!"

"My life before that brigantine! Sir, you forget our fortunes are protected by one who laughs at the efforts of your fleet. You think that we are inclosed,

and that, when light shall return, there will remain merely the easy task to place your iron-mounted cruiser on our beam, and drive us to seek mercy. Here are honest mariners who could tell you of the hopelessness of the expedient. The *Water-Witch* has run the gauntlet of all your navies, and shot has never yet defaced her beauty."

"And yet her limbs have been known to fall before a messenger from my ship."

"The stick wanted the commission of our mistress," interrupted the other, glancing his eye at the credulous and attentive crew of the boat. "In a thoughtless moment 'twas taken up at sea and fashioned to our purpose without counsel from the book. Nothing that touches our decks, under fitting advice, comes to harm. You look incredulous, and it is character to seem so. If you refuse to listen to the lady of the brigantine, at least lend an ear to your own laws. Of what offense can you charge Master Seadrift, that you hold him captive?"

"His redoubted name of Skimmer of the Seas were warranty to force him from a sanctuary," returned Ludlow, smiling. "Though proof should fail of any immediate crime there is impunity for the arrest, since the law refuses to protect him."

"This is your boasted justice! Rogues in authority combine to condemn an absent and a silent man. But if you think to do your violence with impunity, know there are those who take deep interest in the welfare of that youth."

"This is foolish bandying of menaces," said the Captain, warmly. "If you accept my offers, speak; and if you reject them, abide the consequences."

"I abide the consequences. But since we cannot come to terms as victor and the submitting party, we may part in amity. Touch my hand, Captain Ludlow, as one brave man should salute another though the next minute they are to grapple at the throat."

Ludlow hesitated. The proposal was made with so frank and manly a mien, and the air of the freetrader, as he leaned beyond the gunwale of his boat, was so superior to his pursuit, that, unwilling to seem churlish, or to be outdone in courtesy, he reluctantly consented, and laid his palm within the other offered. The smuggler profited by the junction to draw the boats nearer, and, to the amazement of all who witnessed the action, he stepped boldly into the yawl, and was seated face to face with its officer in a moment.

"These are matters that are not fit for every ear," said the decided and confident mariner, in an undertone, when he had made this sudden change in the position of the parties. "Deal with me frankly, Captain Ludlow; is your prisoner left to brood on his melancholy, or does he feel the consolation of knowing that others take an interest in his welfare?"

"He does not want for sympathy, Master Tiller, since he has the pity of the finest woman in America."

"Ha! la belle Barberie owns her esteem; is the conjecture right?"

"Unhappily you are too near the truth. The infatuated girl seems but to live in his presence. She has so far forgotten the opinion of others as to follow him to my ship."

Tiller listened intently; from that instant all concern disappeared from his countenance.

"He who is thus favored may, for a moment, even forget the brigantine!" he exclaimed, with his natural recklessness of air. "And the Alderman?"

"Has more discretion than his niece, since he did not permit her to come alone."

"Enough. Captain Ludlow, let what will follow, we part as friends. Fear not, sir, to touch the hand of a proscribed man again; it is honest after its own fashion, and many is the peer and prince who keeps not so clean a palm. Deal tenderly with that gay and rash young sailor, he wants the discretion of an older head, but the heart is kindness itself. I would hazard life to shelter his, but at every hazard the brigantine must be saved. Adieu."

There was emotion in the voice of the mariner of the shawl, notwithstanding his high bearing. Squeezing the hand of Ludlow, he passed back into his own barge with the ease and steadiness of one who had made the ocean his home.

"Adieu!" he repeated, signing to his men to pull in the direction of the shoals, where it was certain the ship could not follow. "We may meet again; until then, adieu."

"We are sure to meet with the return of light."

"Believe it not, brave gentleman. Our lady will thrust the spars under her girdle, and pass a fleet unseen. A sailor's blessing on you; fair winds and a plenty; a safe land-fall, and a cheerful home! Deal kindly by the boy; and, in all but evil wishes to my vessel, success light on your ensign!"

The seamen of both boats dashed their oars into the water at the same instant, and the two parties were quickly without the hearing of the voice.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Did I tell this,
Who would believe me?"
—MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

THE time of the interview related in the close of the preceding chapter was in the early watches of the night. It now becomes our duty to transport the reader to another that had place several hours later, and after day had dawned on the industrious burghers of Manhattan.

There stood near one of the wooden wharves, which lined the arm of the sea on which the city is so happily placed, a dwelling, around which there was every sign that its owner was engaged in a retail commerce, that was active and thriving for that age and country. Notwithstanding the earliness of the hour, the windows of this house were open; and an individual, of a busy-looking face, thrust his head so often from one of the casements, as to show that he had already expected the appearance of a second party in the affair that had probably called him from his bed even sooner than common. A tremendous rap at the door relieved his visible uneasiness; and, hastening to open it, he received his visitor with much parade of ceremony, and many protestations of respect, in person.

"This is an honor, my lord, that does not often befall men of my humble condition," said the master of the house, in the flippant utterance of a vulgar cockney; "but I thought it would be more agreeable to your lordship to receive the a—a—here than in the place where your lordship just at this moment resides. Will your lordship please to rest yourself, after your lordship's walk?"

"I thank you, Carnaby," returned the other, taking the offered seat with an air of easy superiority. "You judge with your usual discretion as respects the place, though I doubt the prudence of seeing him at all. Has the man come?"

"Doubtless, my lord; he would hardly presume to keep your lordship waiting, and much less would I countenance him in so gross a disrespect. He will be most happy to wait on you, whenever your lordship shall please."

"Let him wait; there is no necessity for haste. He has probably communicated some of the objects of this extraordinary call on my time, Carnaby; and you can break them in the intervening moments."

"I am sorry to say, my lord, that the fellow is as obstinate as a mule. I felt the impropriety of introducing him personally to your lordship; but as he insisted he had affairs that would deeply interest you, my lord, I could not take upon me to say what would be agreeable to your lordship, or what not; and so I was bold enough to write the note."

"And a very properly expressed note it was, Master Carnaby. I have not received a better-worded communication since my arrival in this colony."

"I am sure the approbation of your lordship might justly make any man proud. It is the ambition of my life, my lord, to do the duties of my station in a proper manner, and to treat all above me with a suitable respect, my lord, and all below me as in reason bound. If I might presume to think in such a matter, my lord, I should say that these colonists are no great judges of propriety in their correspondence, or, indeed, in anything else."

The noble visitor shrugged his shoulders,

and threw an expression into his look that encouraged the retailer to proceed.

"It is just what I think myself, my lord," he continued, simpering; "but then," he added, with a condoling and patronizing air, "how should they know any better? England is but an island, after all; and the whole world cannot be born and educated on the same bit of earth."

"'Twould be inconvenient, Carnaby, if it led to no other unpleasant consequence."

"Almost word for word what I said to Mrs. Carnaby myself, no later than yesterday, my lord, only vastly better expressed. 'Twould be inconvenient,' said I, 'Mrs. Carnaby, to take in the other lodger, for everybody cannot live in the same house;' which covers, as it were, the ground taken in your lordship's sentiment. I ought to add, in behalf of the poor woman, that she expressed, on the same occasion, strong regrets that it is reported your lordship will be likely to quit us soon, on your return to old England."

"That is really a subject on which there is more cause to rejoice than to weep. This imprisoning, or placing within limits, so near a relative of the crown, is an affair that must have unpleasant consequences, and which offends sadly against propriety."

"It is awful, my lord! If it be not sacrilege by the law, the greater the shame of the Opposition in Parliament, who defeat so many other wholesome regulations intended for the good of the subject."

"Faith, I am not sure I may not be driven to join them myself, bad as they are, Carnaby; for this neglect of ministers, not to call it by a worse name, might goad a man to a more heinous measure."

"I am sure nobody could blame your lordship, were your lordship to join anybody, or anything, but the French! I have often told Mrs. Carnaby as much as that in our frequent conversations concerning the unpleasant situation in which your lordship is just now placed."

"I had not thought the awkward transactions attracted so much notice," observed the other, evidently wincing under the allusion.

"It attracts it only in a proper and respectful way, my lord. Neither Mrs. Carnaby, nor myself, ever indulges in any of these remarks, but in the most proper and truly English manner."

"The reservation might palliate a greater error. That word proper is a prudent term, and expresses all one could wish. I had not thought you so intelligent and shrewd a man, Master Carnaby; clever in the way of business, I always knew you to be; but so apt in reason, and so matured in principle, is what I will confess I had not expected. Can you form no conjecture of the business of this man?"

"Not in the least, my lord. I pressed the impropriety of a personal interview; for though he alluded to some business or other, I scarcely know what, with which he appeared to think your lordship had some connection, I did not understand him, and we had liked to have parted without an explanation."

"I will not see the fellow."

"Just as your lordship pleases—I am sure that, after so many little affairs have passed through my hands, I might be safely trusted with this; and I said as much—but as he positively refused to make me an agent, and he insisted that it was so much to your lordship's interest—why I thought, my lord, that perhaps—just now——"

"Show him in."

Carnaby bowed low and submissively, and, after busying himself in placing the chairs aside, and adjusting the table more conveniently for the elbow of his guest, he left the room.

"Where is the man I bid you keep in the shop?" demanded the retailer, in a coarse, authoritative voice when without; addressing a meek and humble looking lad who did the duty of clerk. "I warrant me he is left in the kitchen, and you have been idling about on the walk! A more heedless and inattentive lad than yourself is not to be found in America, and the sun never rises but I repent having signed your indentures. You shall pay for this, you——"

The appearance of the person he sought

cut short the denunciations of the obsequious grocer and the domestic tyrant. He opened the door, and having again closed it, left his two visitors together.

Though the degenerated descendant of the great Clarendon had not hesitated to lend his office to cloak the irregular and unlawful trade that was then so prevalent in the American seas, he had paid the sickly but customary deference to virtue of refusing on all occasions to treat personally with its agents. Sheltered behind his official and personal rank, he had soothed his feelings by tacitly believing that cupidity is less venal when its avenues are hidden; and that in protecting his station from an immediate contact with its ministers, he had discharged an important, and, for one in his situation, an imperative duty. Unequal to the exercise of virtue itself, he thought he had done enough in preserving some of its seemliness. Though far from paying even this slight homage to decency in his more ordinary habits, his pride of rank had, on the subject of so coarse a failing, induced him to maintain an appearance which his pride of character would not have suggested. Carnaby was much the most degraded and the lowest of those with whom he ever condescended to communicate directly; and even with him there might have been some scruple had not his necessities caused him to stoop so far as to accept pecuniary assistance from one he both despised and detested.

When the door opened, therefore, the Lord Cornbury rose, and determined to bring the interview to a speedy issue. He turned to face the individual who entered with a mien into which he threw all the distance and hauteur that he thought necessary for such an object. But he encountered in the mariner of the India-shawl a very different man from the flattering and obsequious grocer who had just quitted him. Eye met eye; his gaze of authority receiving a look as steady, if not as curious, as his own. It was evident by the composure of the fine, manly frame he saw that its owner rested his claims on the aristocracy of nature. The noble forgot his acting under the influence or surprise, and his voice expressed as much admiration as command when he said—

"This, then, is the Skimmer of the Seas!"

"Men call me thus; if a life passed on oceans gives a claim to the title, it has been fairly earned."

"Your character—I may say that some portions of your history, are not unknown to me. Poor Carnaby, who is a worthy and an industrious man, with a growing family dependent on his exertions, has entreated me to receive you, or there might be less apology for this step than I could wish. Men of a certain rank, Master Skimmer, owe so much to their station that I rely on your discretion."

"I have stood in nobler presences, my lord, and found so little change by the honor that I am not apt to boast of what I see. Some of princely rank have found their profit in my acquaintance."

"I do not deny your usefulness, sir; it is only the necessity of prudence I would urge. There has been, I believe, some sort of implied contract between us—at least, so Carnaby explains the transaction, for I rarely enter into these details myself—by which you perhaps may feel some right to include me in the list of your customers. Men in high places must respect the laws; yet it is not always convenient, or even useful, that they should deny themselves every indulgence which policy would prohibit to the mass. One who has seen as much of life as yourself needs no explanation on this head; and I cannot doubt but our present interview will have a satisfactory termination."

The Skimmer scarce deemed it necessary to conceal the contempt that caused his lip to curl, while the other was endeavoring to mystify his cupidity. When the speaker was done he merely expressed an assent by a slight inclination of the head. The ex-governor saw that his attempt was fruitless, and by relinquishing his masquerade and yielding more to his natural propensities and tastes he succeeded better.

"Carnaby has been a faithful agent," he continued, "and by his reports it would

seem that our confidence has not been misplaced. If fame speaks true, there is not a more dexterous navigator of the narrow seas than thyself, Master Skimmer. It is to be supposed that your correspondents on this coast, too, are as lucrative as I doubt not they are numerous."

"He who sells cheap can never want a purchaser. I think your lordship has no reason to complain of prices."

"As pointed as his compass! Well, sir, as I am no longer master here, may I ask the object of this interview?"

"I have come to seek your interest in behalf of one who has fallen into the grasp of the Queen's officers."

"Hum—the amount of which is, that the cruiser in the bay has entrapped a careless smuggler. We are none of us immortal, and an arrest is but a legal death of men of your persuasion in commerce. Interest is a word of many meanings. It is the interest of one man to lend, and of another to borrow—of the creditor to receive, and of the debtor to avoid payment. Then there is interest at court, and interest in court—in short, you must deal more frankly ere I can decide on the purport of your visit."

"I am not ignorant that the Queen has been pleased to name another governor over this colony, or that your creditors, my lord, have thought it prudent to take a pledge for their dues, in you person. Still, I must think that one who stands so near the Queen in blood, and who sooner or later must enjoy both rank and fortune in the mother country, will not solicit so slight a boon as that I ask without success. This is the reason I prefer to treat with you."

"As clear an explanation as the shrewdest casuist could desire! I admire your succinctness, Master Skimmer, and confess you for the pink of etiquette. When your fortune shall be made, I recommend the court circle as your place of retirement. Governors, creditors, Queen, and imprisonment, all as compactly placed in the same sentence as if it were the creed written on a thumb-nail! Well, sir, we will suppose my interest what you wish it. Who and what is the delinquent?"

"One named Seadrift—a useful and a pleasant youth, who passes much between me and my customers; heedless and merry in his humors, but dear to all in my brigantine, because of tried fidelity and shrewd wit. We could sacrifice the profits of the voyage that he were free. To me he is a necessary agent, for his skill in the judgment of rich tissues, and other luxuries that compose my traffic, is exceeding; and I am better fitted to guide the vessel to her haven, and to look to her safety amid shoals and in tempests, than to deal in these trifles of female vanity."

"So dexterous a go-between should not have mistaken a tide-waiter for a customer—how befell the accident?"

"He met the barge of the *Coquette* at an unlucky moment, and as we had so lately been chased off the coast by the cruiser there was no choice but to arrest him."

"The dilemma it not without embarrassment. When once his mind is settled, it is no trifle that will amuse this Mr. Ludlow. I do not know a more literal constructor of his orders; a man, sir, who thinks words have but a single set of meanings, and who knows as little as can be imagined of the difference between a sentiment and a practice."

"He is a seaman, my lord, and he reads his instructions with a seaman's simplicity. I think none the worse of him, that he cannot be tempted from his duty; for, let us understand the right as we will, our service once taken, it becomes us all to do it faithfully."

A small red spot came and went on the cheek of the profligate Cornbury. Ashamed of his weakness, he affected to laugh at what he heard, and continued the discourse.

"Your forbearance and charity might adorn a churchman, Master Skimmer!" he answered. "Nothing can be more true, for this is an age of moral truths, as witness the Protestant succession. Men are now expected to perform, and not to profess. Is the fellow of such usefulness that he may not be abandoned to his fate?"

"Much as I dote on my brigantine, and

few men set their affections on woman with stronger love, I would see the beauteous craft degenerate into a cutter for the Queen's revenue before I could entertain the thought! But I will not anticipate a long and painful imprisonment for the youth, since those who are not altogether powerless already take a deep and friendly concern in his safety."

"You have overcome the brigadier!" cried the other, in a burst of exultation, that conquered the little reserve of manner he had thought it necessary to maintain; "that immaculate and reforming representative of my royal cousin has bitten of the golden bait, and proves a true colony governor after all!"

"Lord Viscount, no. What we have to hope or what we have to fear from your successor, is to me a secret."

"Ply him with promises, Master Skimmer—set golden hopes before his imagination; set gold itself before his eyes, and you will prosper. I will pledge my expected earldom that he yields! Sir, these distant situations are like so many half-authorized mints, in which money is to be coined; and the only counterfeit is your mimic representative of Majesty. Ply him with golden hopes; if mortal, he will yield!"

"Yet, my lord, I have met men who preferred poverty and their opinions to gold and the wishes of others."

"The dolts were lusus naturæ!" exclaimed the dissolute Cornbury, losing all reserve in a manner that better suited his known and confirmed character. "You should have caged them, Skimmer, and profited by their dullness to lay the curious under contribution. Don't mistake me, sir, if I speak a little in confidence. I hope I know the difference between a gentleman and a leveler, as well as another; but trust me, this Mr. Hunter is human, and he will yield if proper appliances are used; and you expect from me——"

"The exercise of that influence which cannot fail of success; since there is a courtesy between men of a certain station, which causes them to overlook rivalry, in a spirit of their caste. The cousin of Queen Anne can yet obtain the liberty of one whose heaviest crime is a free trade, though he may not be able to keep his own seat in the chair of the government."

"Thus far, indeed, my poor influence may yet extend, provided the fellow be not named in any act of outlawry. I would gladly enough, Mr. Skimmer, end my deeds in this hemisphere with some act of graceful mercy, if—indeed—I saw —the means——"

"They shall not be wanting. I know the law is like any other article of great price; some think that justice holds the balance, in order to weigh her fees. Though the profits of this hazardous and sleepless trade of mine be much overrated, I would gladly line her scales with two hundred broad pieces, to have that youth again safe in the cabin of the brigantine."

As the Skimmer of the Seas thus spoke, he drew, with the calmness of a man who saw no use in circumlocution, a heavy bag of gold from beneath his frock, and deposited it, without a second look at the treasure, on the table. When this offering was made he turned aside, less by design than a careless movement of the body, and, when he faced his companion again, the bag had vanished.

"Your affection for the lad is touching, Master Skimmer," returned the corrupt Cornbury; "it were a pity such friendship should be wasted. Will there be proof to insure his condemnation?"

"It may be doubted. His dealings have only been with the higher class of my customers, and with but few of them. The care I now take is more in tenderness to the youth than with any great doubts of the result. I shall count you, my lord, among his protectors, in the event that the affair is noised!"

"I owe it to your frankness—but will Mr. Ludlow content himself with the possession of an inferior, when the principal is so near? and shall we not have a confiscation of the brigantine on our hands?"

"I charge myself with the care of all else. There was indeed a lucky escape only the last night as we lay at a light kedge, waiting for the return of him who

has been arrested. Profiting by the possession of our skiff, the commander of the *Coquette* himself got within the sweep of my hawse—nay, he was in the act of cutting the very fastenings, when the dangerous design was discovered. 'Twould have been a fate unworthy of the *Water-Witch* to be cast on shore like a drifting log, and to check her noble career by some such a seizure as that of a stranded waif!"

"You avoided the mischance?"

"My eyes are seldom shut, Lord Viscount, when there is danger. The skiff was seen in time and watched; for I knew that one in whom I trusted was abroad. When the movement grew suspicious, we had our means of frightening this Mr. Ludlow from his enterprise, without recourse to violence."

"I have not thought him one to be scared from following up a business like this."

"You judged him rightly—I may say we judged him rightly. But when his boat sought us at our anchorage, the bird had flown."

"You got the brigantine to sea in season?" observed Cornbury, not sorry to believe that the vessel was already off the coast.

"I had other business. My agent could not be thus deserted, and there were affairs to finish in the city. Our course lay up the bay."

"Ha! Master Skimmer, 'twas a bold step, and one that says little for your discretion!"

"Lord Viscount, there is safety in courage," calmly and perhaps ironically returned the other. "While the Queen's Captain closed all the outlets, my little craft was floating quietly under the hills of Staten. Before the morning watch was set, she passed three wharves; and she now awaits her Captain in the broad basin that lies beyond the bend of yonder headland."

"This is foolhardiness. A failure of wind, a change of the tide, or any of the mishaps common to the sea, may throw you on the mercy of the law, and will greatly embarrass all who feel an interest in your safety."

"So far as this apprehension is connected with my welfare, I thank you much, my lord; but trust me, many hazards have left me but little to learn in this particular. We shall run the Hell-Gate and gain the open sea by the Connecticut Sound."

"Truly, Master Skimmer, one has need of nerves to be your confidant! Faith in a compact constitutes the beauty of social order; without it there is no security for interests, nor any repose for character. But faith may be implied as well as expressed; and when men in certain situations place their dependence on others who should have motives for being wary, the first are bound to respect, even to the details of a most scrupulous construction, the conditions of the covenant. Sir, I wash my hands of this transaction, if it be understood that testimony is to be accumulated against us by thus putting your *Water-Witch* in danger of trial before the admiralty."

"I am sorry that this is your decision," returned the Skimmer. "What is done, cannot be recalled, though I still hope it may be remedied. My brigantine now lies within a league of this, and 'twould be treachery to deny it. Since it is your opinion, my lord, that our contract is not valid, there is little use in its seal—the broad pieces may still be serviceable in shielding the youth from harm."

"You are as literal in constructions, Master Skimmer, as a school-boy's version of his Virgil. There is an idiom in diplomacy, as well as in language, and one who treats so sensibly should not be ignorant of its phrases. Bless me, sir; an hypothesis is not a conclusion, any more than a promise is a performance. That which is advanced by way of supposition is but the ornament of reasoning, while your gold has the more solid character of demonstration. Our bargain is made."

The unsophisticated mariner regarded the noble casuist a moment, in doubt whether to acquiesce in this conclusion, or not; but ere he had decided on his course, the windows of the room were shaken violently and the heavy roar of a piece of ordnance succeeded.

"The morning gun!" exclaimed Cornbury, who started at the explosion with the sensitiveness of one unworthily employed. "No! 'tis an hour past the rising of the sun!"

The Skimmer showed no yielding of the nerves, though it was evident by his attitude of thought and the momentary fixedness of his eye that he foresaw danger was near. Moving to the window, he looked out on the water, and instantly drew back, like one who wanted no farther evidence.

"Our bargain, then, is made," he said, hastily approaching the Viscount, whose hand he seized and wrung in spite of the other's obvious reluctance to allow the familiarity; "our bargain is made. Deal fairly by the youth, and the deed will be remembered—deal treacherously, and it shall be revenged!"

For an instant longer the Skimmer held the member of the effeminate Cornbury imprisoned; then, raising his cap with a courtesy that appeared more in deference to himself than his companion, he turned on his heel, and with a firm but quick step he left the house.

Carnaby, who entered on the instant, found his guest in a state between resentment, surprise and alarm. But habitual levity soon conquered other feelings, and finding himself freed from the presence of a man who had treated him with so little ceremony, the ex-governor shook his head like one accustomed to submit to evils he could not obviate, and assumed the ease and indolent superiority he was accustomed to maintain in the presence of the obsequious grocer.

"This may be a coral or a pearl, or any other precious gem of the ocean, Master Carnaby," he said, unconscious himself that he was in a manner endeavoring to cleanse his violated hand from the touch it had endured, by the use of his handkerchief, "but it is one on which the salt water hath left its crust. Truly it is to be hoped that I am never again to be blockaded by such a monster, or I may better say, harpooned; for the familiarity of the boatswain is more painful than any inventions of his brethren of the deep can prove to their relative the leviathan. Has the clock told the hour?"

"'Tis not yet six, my lord, and there is abundant leisure for your lordship to return in season to your lordship's lodgings. Mrs. Carnaby has dared to flatter herself that your lordship will condescend to honor us so far as to taste a dish of bohea under our humble roof."

"What is the meaning of that gun, Master Carnaby? It gave the alarm to the smuggler as if it had been a summons from Execution Dock, or a groan from the ghost of Kidd."

"I never presume to think, my lord. I suppose it to be some pleasure of her Majesty's officers in the fort; and when that is the case, one is quite certain that all is proper and very English, my lord."

"'Fore George, sir, English or Dutch, it hath the quality to frighten the sea-fowl—this curlew—this albatross, from his perch!"

"Upon my duty to your lordship, your lordship has the severest wit of any gentleman in her Majesty's kingdom; but all the nobility and gentry are so witty that it is quite an honor and an edification to hear them! If it is your lordship's pleasure I will look out of the window, my lord, and see if there be anything visible."

"Do so, Master Carnaby—I confess a little curiosity to know what has given the alarm to my sea-lion—ha! do I not see the masts of a ship moving above the roofs of yonder line of stores?"

"Well, your lordship has the quickest eye! and the happiest way of seeing things of any nobleman in England! Now I should have stared a quarter of an hour before I thought of looking over the roofs of those stores at all; and yet your lordship looks there at the very first glance."

"Is it a ship or a brig, Master Carnaby—you have the advantage of position, for I would not willingly be seen—speak quickly, dolt; ship or brig?"

"My lord—'tis a brig—or a ship—really, I must ask your lordship, for I know so little of these things——"

"Nay, complaisant Master Carnaby—have an opinion of your own for one mo-

ment, if you please—there is smoke curling upward, behind those masts——"

Another rattling of windows, and a second report, removed all doubts on the subject of firing. At the next instant, the bows of a vessel of war appeared at the opening of a ship-yard; then came gun after gun in view, until the whole broadside of the *Coquette* was visible.

The Viscount sought no further solution of the reason why the Skimmer had left him so hurriedly. Fumbling a moment in a pocket, he drew forth a hand filled with broad pieces of gold. These he appeared about to lay upon the table; but, as it were by forgetfulness, he kept the member closed, and bidding the grocer adieu, he left the house, with as firm a resolution as was ever made by any man, conscious of having done both a weak and a wicked action, of never again putting himself in familiar contact with so truckling a miscreant.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"What care these roarers for the name of king?"
—TEMPEST.

THE Manhattanese will readily comprehend the situation of the two vessels; but those of our countrymen who live in distant parts of the Union may be glad to have the localities explained.

Though the vast estuary which receives the Hudson and so many minor streams is chiefly made by an indentation of the continent, that portion of it which forms the port of New York is separated from the ocean by the happy position of its islands. Of the latter there are two, which give the general character to the basin, and even to a long line of coast; while several, that are smaller, serve as useful and beautiful accessories to the haven and to the landscape. Between the bay of Raritan and that of New York there are two communications, one between the islands of Staten and Nassau, called the Narrows, which is the ordinary ship-channel of the port, and the other between Staten and the main, which is known by the name of the Kills. It is by means of the latter that vessels pass into the neighboring waters of New Jersey, and have access to so many of the rivers of that State. But while the island of Staten does so much for the security and facilities of the port, that of Nassau produces an effect on a great extent of coast. After sheltering one-half of the harbor from the ocean, the latter approaches so near the continent as to narrow the passage between them to the length of two cables, and then stretching away eastward for the distance of a hundred miles, it forms a wide and beautiful sound. After passing a cluster of islands, at a point which lies forty leagues from the city, by another passage, vessels can gain the open sea.

The seaman will at once understand that the tide of flood must necessarily flow into these vast estuaries from different directions. The current which enters by Sandy Hook (the scene of so much of this tale) flows westward into the Jersey rivers, northward into the Hudson, and eastward along the arm of the sea that lies between Nassau and the Main. The current that comes by the way of Montauk, or the eastern extremity of Nassau, raises the vast basin of the Sound, fills the streams of Connecticut, and meets the western tide at a place called Throgmorton, and within twenty miles of the city.

As the size of the estuaries is so great, it is scarcely necessary to explain that the pressure of such wide sheets of water causes the currents, at all the narrow passes, to be exceedingly rapid; since that equal diffusion of the element, which depends on a natural law, must, wherever there is a deficiency of space, be obtained by its velocity. There is, consequently, a quick tide throughout the whole distance between the harbor and Throgmorton; while it is permitted to poetic license to say, that at the narrowest part of the channel, the water darts by the land like an arrow parting from its bow. Owing to a sudden bend in the course of the stream, which makes two right angles within a short distance, the dangerous position of many rocks that are visible and more that are not, and the confusion produced by currents, counter-currents, and eddies, this critical pass has received the name

of "Hell-Gate." It is memorable for causing many a gentle bosom to palpitate with a terror that is little exaggerated by the boding name, though it is constantly the cause of pecuniary losses, and has in many instances been the source of much personal danger. It was here that a British frigate was lost, during the war of the Revolution, in consequence of having struck a rock called "the Pot," the blow causing the ship to fill and to founder so suddenly, that even some of her people are said to have been drowned. A similar but a greatly lessened effect is produced in the passage among the islands, by which vessels gain the ocean at the eastern extremity of the Sound—though the magnitude of the latter sheet of water is so much greater than that of Raritan Bay and the harbor of New York, that the force of its pressure is diminished by a corresponding width in the outlets. With these explanations, we shall return to the thread of the narrative.

When the person who has so long been known in our pages by the nom de guerre of Tiller gained the open street, he had a better opportunity of understanding the nature of the danger which so imminently pressed upon the brigantine. With a single glance at the symmetrical spars and broad yards of the ship that was sweeping past the town, he knew her to be the *Coquette*. The little flag at her fore-topgallant-mast sufficiently explained the meaning of the gun; for the two, in conjunction with the direction the ship was steering, told him in language that any seaman could comprehend, that she demanded a Hell-Gate pilot. By the time the Skimmer reached the end of a lone wharf, where a light and swift rowing boat awaited his return, the second report bespoke the impatience of his pursuers to be furnished with the necessary guide.

Though the navigation in this republic, coastwise, now employs a tonnage equaling that used in all the commerce of any other nation of Christendom, England alone excepted, it was of no great amount at the commencement of the eighteenth century. A single ship, lying at the wharves, and two or three brigs and schooners at anchor in the rivers, composed the whole show of sea-vessels then in port. To these were to be added some twenty smaller coasters and river-craft, most of whom were the shapeless and slow-moving masses which then plied, in voyages of a month's duration, between the two principal towns of the colony. The appeal of the *Coquette*, therefore, at that hour and in that age, was not likely to be very quickly answered.

The ship had got fairly into the arms of the sea which separates the island of Manhattan from that of Nassau, and though it was not then, as now, narrowed by artificial means, its tide was so strong as, aided by the breeze, to float her swiftly onward. A third gun shook the windows of the city, causing many a worthy burgher to thrust his head through his casement; yet no boat was seen pulling from the land, nor was there any other visible sign that the signal would be speedily obeyed. Still the royal cruiser stood steadily on, with sail packed above sail, and every sheet of canvas spread, that the direction of a wind, which blew a little forward of the beam, would allow.

"We must pull for our own safety and that of the brigantine, my men," said the Skimmer, springing into his boat, and seizing the tiller. "A quick stroke, and a strong! here is no time for holiday feathering, or your man-of-war jerk! Give way, boys; give way, with a will, and together!"

These were sounds that had often saluted the ears of men engaged in the hazardous pursuit of his crew. The oars fell into the water at the same moment, and, quick as thought, the light bark was in the strength of the current.

The short range of wharves was soon passed, and, ere many minutes, the boat was gliding up with the tide, between the bluffs of Long Island and the projection which forms the angle on that part of Manhattan. Here the Skimmer was induced to sheer more into the center of the passage, in order to avoid the eddies formed by the point, and to preserve the whole benefit of the current. As the boat

approached Corlaer's, his eye was anxiously examining the wider reach of the water that began to open above, in quest of his brigantine. Another gun was heard. A moment after the report there followed the whistling of a shot; then succeeded the rebound on the water and the glittering particles of the spray. The ball glanced a few hundred feet farther, and, skipping from place to place, it soon sank into the element.

"This Mr. Ludlow is disposed to kill two birds with the same stone," coolly observed the Skimmer, not even bending his head aside to note the position of the ship. "He wakes the burghers of the town with his noise, while he menaces our boat with his shot. We are seen, my friends, and have no dependence but our own manhood, with some assistance from the lady of the sea-green mantle. A quicker stroke, and a strong! You have the Queen's cruiser before you, Master Coil; does she show boats on her quarters, or are the davits empty?"

The seaman addressed pulled the stroke-oar of the boat, and consequently he faced the *Coquette*. Without in the least relaxing his exertions, he rolled his eyes over the ship, and answered with a steadiness that showed him to be a man accustomed to situations of hazard:

"His boat-falls are as loose as a mermaid's locks, your honor, and he shows few men in his tops; there are enough of the rogues left, however, to give us another shot."

"Her Majesty's servants are early awake this morning. Another stroke or two, hearts of oak, and we throw them behind the land!"

A second shot fell into the water just without the blades of the oars; then the boat, obedient to its helm, whirled round the point, and the ship was no longer visible. As the cruiser was shut in by the formation of the land, the brigantine came into view on the opposite side of Corlaer's. Notwithstanding the calmness that reigned in the features of the Skimmer, one who studied his countenance closely might have seen an expression of concern shadowing his manly face, as the *Water-Witch* met his eye. Still he spoke not, concealing his uneasiness, if in truth he felt any, from those whose exertions were at that moment of the last importance. As the crew of the expecting vessel saw their boat, they altered their course, and the two were soon together.

"Why is that signal still flying?" demanded the Skimmer, the instant his foot touched the deck of his brigantine, and pointing, as he spoke, at the little flag that fluttered at the head of the forward mast.

"We keep it aloft to hasten off the pilot," was the answer.

"Has not the treacherous knave kept faith?" exclaimed the Skimmer, half recoiling in surprise. "He has my gold, and in return I hold fifty of his worthless promises—ha!—the laggard is in yon skiff; wear the brig round and meet him, for moments are as precious now as water in a desert."

The helm was a-weather, and the lively brigantine had already turned more than half aside, when another gun drew every eye toward the point. The smoke was seen rising above the bend in the land, and presently the head-sails, followed by all the hull and spars of the *Coquette*, came into view.

At that instant a voice from forward announced that the pilot had turned, and was rowing with all his might toward the shore. The imprecations that were heaped on the head of the delinquent were many and deep, but it was no time for indecision. The two vessels were now not half a mile apart, and now was the moment to show the qualities of the *Water-Witch*. Her helm was shifted; and, as if conscious herself of the danger that threatened her liberty, the beautiful fabric came sweeping up to her course, and, inclining to the breeze, with one heavy flap of the canvas, she glided ahead with her wonted ease. But the royal cruiser was a ship of ten thousand! For twenty minutes the nicest eye might have been at a loss to say which lost or gained, so equally did the pursuer and the pursued hold on their way. As the brigantine was the

first, however, to reach the narrow passage, formed by Blackwell's, her motion was favored by the increasing power of the stream. It would seem that this change, slight as it was, did not escape the vigilance of those in the *Coquette*; for the gun, which had been silent so long, again sent forth its flame and smoke. Four discharges, in less than so many minutes, threatened a serious disadvantage to the freetraders. Shot after shot passed among their spars, and opened wide rents in the canvas. A few more such assaults would deprive them of their means of motion. Aware of the crisis, the accomplished and prompt seaman who governed her movements needed but an instant to form his decision.

The brigantine was now nearly up with the head of Blackwell's. It was half-flood on a spring tide. The reef that projects from the western end of the island far into the reach below, was nearly covered; but still enough was visible to show the nature of the barrier it presented to a passage from one shore to the other. There was a rock, near the island itself, which lifted its black head high above the water. Between this dark mass of stone and the land there was an opening of some twenty fathoms in width. The Skimmer saw, by the even and unbroken waves that rolled through the passage, that the bottom lay less near to the surface of the water in that opening, than at any other point along the line of the reef. He commanded the helm a-weather once more, and calmly trusted to the issue.

Not a man on board the brigantine was aware that the shot of the royal cruiser was whistling between their masts, and damaging their gear, as the little vessel glided into the narrow opening. A single blow on the rock would have been destruction, and the lesser danger was entirely absorbed. But when the passage was cleared, and the true stream in the other channel gained, a common shout proclaimed both the weight of their apprehension and their relief. In another minute the head of Blackwell's protected them from the shot of their pursuers.

The length of the reef prevented the *Coquette* from changing her direction, and her draught of water closed the passage between the rock and the island. But the deviation from the straight course, and the passage of the eddies, had enabled the ship, which came steadily on, to range up nearly abeam of her chase. Both vessels, though separated by the long, narrow island, were now fairly in the force of those currents which glide so swiftly through the confined passages. A sudden thought glanced on the mind of the Skimmer, and he lost no time in attempting to execute its suggestion. Again the helm was put up, and the image of the sea-green lady was seen struggling to stem the rapid waters. Had this effort been crowned with success, the triumph of her followers would have been complete; since the brigantine might have reached some of the eddies of the reach below, and leaving her heavier pursuer to contend with the strength of the tide, she would have gained the open sea by the route over which she had so lately passed. But a single minute of trial convinced the bold mariner that his decision came too late. The wind was insufficient to pass the gorge; and, environed by the land, with a tide that grew stronger at each moment, he saw that delay would be destruction. Once more the light vessel yielded to the helm, and, with everything set to the best advantage, she darted along the passage.

In the meantime the *Coquette* had not been idle. Borne on by the breeze, and floating with the current, she had even gained upon her chase; and as her lofty and light sails drew strongest over the land, there was every prospect of her first reaching the eastern end of Blackwell's. Ludlow saw his advantage, and made his preparations accordingly.

There needs little explanation to render the circumstances which brought the royal cruiser up to town, intelligible to the reader. As the morning approached, she had entered more deeply into the bay; and when the light permitted, those on board her had been able to see that no vessel lay beneath the hills, nor in any of the more retired places of the estuary. A

fisherman, however, removed the last of their doubts, by reporting that he had seen a vessel, whose description answered that of the *Water-Witch*, passing the Narrows in the middle watch. He added that a swiftly-rowing boat was, shortly after, seen pulling in the same direction. This clew had been sufficient. Ludlow made a signal for his own boats to close the passage of the Kills and the Narrows, and then, as has been seen, he steered directly into the harbor.

When Ludlow found himself in the position just described, he turned all his attention to the double object of preserving his own vessel and arresting that of the freetrader. Though there was still a possibility of damaging the spars of the brigantine by firing across the land, the feebleness of his own crew, reduced as it was by more than half its numbers, the danger of doing injury to the farm-houses that were here and there placed along the low cliffs, and the necessity of preparation to meet the critical pass ahead, united to prevent the attempt. The ship was no sooner fairly entered into the pass between Blackwell's and Nassau, than he issued an order to secure the guns that had been used, and to clear away the anchors.

"Cock-bill the bowers, sir," he hastily added, in his orders to Trysail. "We are in no condition to sport with stock-and-fluke; have everything ready to let go at a word; and see the grapnels ready—we will throw them aboard the smuggler as we close, and take him alive. Once fast to the chain, we are yet strong enough to haul him in under our scuppers, and to capture him with the pumps! Is the signal still abroad for a pilot?"

"We keep it flying, sir, but 'twill be a swift boat that overhauls us in this tide's-way. The Gate begins at yonder bend in the land, Captain Ludlow!"

"Keep it abroad; the lazy rogues are sometimes loitering in the cove this side the rock, and chance may throw one of them aboard us as we pass. See to the anchors, sir; the ship is driving through this channel like a race-horse under the whip!"

The men were hurriedly piped to this duty, while their young commander took his station on the poop, now anxiously examining the courses of the tides and the positions of the eddies, and now turning his eyes toward the brigantine, whose upper spars and white sails were to be seen, at the distance of two hundred fathoms, glancing past the trees of the island. But miles and minutes seemed like rods and moments in that swift current. Trysail had just reported the anchors ready, when the ship swept up abreast of the Cove, where the vessels often seek an anchorage, to await favorable moments for entering the Gate. Ludlow saw, at a glance, that the place was entirely empty. For an instant he yielded to the heavy responsibility—a responsibility before which a seaman sooner shrinks than before any other—that of charging himself with the duty of the pilot; and he thought of running into the anchorage for shelter. But another glimpse at the spars of the brigantine caused him to waver.

"We are near the Gate, sir!" cried Trysail, in a voice that was full of warning.

"Yon daring mariner stands on!"

"The rogue sails his vessel without the Queen's permission, Captain Ludlow. They tell me this is a passage that has been well named!"

"I have been through it, and will vouch for its character—he shows no signs of anchoring!"

"If the woman who points his course can carry him through safely, she deserves her title. We are passing the Cove, Captain Ludlow!"

"We are past it!" returned Ludlow, breathing heavily. "Let there be no whisper in the ship—pilot or no pilot, we now sink or swim!"

Trysail had ventured to remonstrate, while there was a possibility of avoiding the danger; but, like his commander, he saw that all depended now on their own coolness and care. He passed busily among the crew; saw that each brace and bowline was manned; cautioned a few young officers who continued on board to vigilance; and then awaited the orders of his

superior with the composure that is necessary to a seaman in the moment of trial. Ludlow himself, while he felt the load of responsibility he had assumed, succeeded equally well in maintaining an outward calm. The ship was irretrievably in the Gate, and no human power could retrace the step. At such moments of intense anxiety, the human mind is wont to seek support in the opinions of others. Notwithstanding the increasing velocity and the critical condition of his own vessel, Ludlow cast a glance, in order to ascertain the determination of the Skimmer of the Seas. Blackwell's was already behind them, and as the two currents were again united, the brigantine had luffed up into the entrance of the dangerous passage, and now followed within two hundred feet of the *Coquette*, directly in her wake. The bold and manly-looking mariner, who controlled her, stood between the knightheads, just above the image of his pretended mistress, where he examined the foaming reefs, the whirling eddies, and the varying currents, with folded arms and a riveted eye. A glance was exchanged between the two officers, and the freetrader raised his sea-cap. Ludlow was too courteous not to return the salutation, then all his senses were engrossed by the care of his ship. A rock lay before them, over which the water broke in a loud and unceasing roar. For an instant it seemed that the vessel could not avoid the danger; then it was already past.

"Brace up!" said Ludlow, in the calm tones that denote a forced tranquillity.

"Luff!" called out the Skimmer, so quickly as to show that he took the movements of the cruiser for his guide. The ship came closer to the wind, but the sudden bend in the stream no longer permitted her to steer in a direct line with its course. Though drifting to windward with vast rapidity, her way through the water, which was greatly increased by the contrary actions of the wind and tide, caused the cruiser to shoot across the current; while a reef, over which the water madly tumbled, lay immediately in her course. The danger seemed too imminent for the observances of nautical etiquette, and Trysail called aloud that the ship must be thrown back, or she was lost.

"Hard-a-lee!" shouted Ludlow, in the strong voice of authority. "Up with everything — tacks and sheets! — maintopsail haul!"

The ship seemed as conscious of her danger as any on her decks. The bows whirled away from the foaming reef, and as the sails caught the breeze on their opposite surfaces, they aided in bringing her head in the contrary direction. A minute had scarcely passed ere she was back, and in the next she was about and full again. The intensity of the brief exertion kept Trysail fully employed; but no sooner had he leisure to look ahead than he again called aloud—

"Here is another roarer under her bows; luff, sir, luff, or we are upon it!"

"Hard down your helm!" once again came in deep tones from Ludlow; "let fly your sheets—throw aback, forward and aft—away with the yards, with a will, men!"

There was need for all these precautions. Though the ship had so happily escaped the danger of the first reef, a turbulent and roaring caldron in the water, which, as representing the element in ebullition, is called "the Pot," lay so directly before her as to render the danger apparently inevitable. But the power of the canvas was not lost on this trying occasion. The forward motion of the ship diminished, and as the current still swept her swiftly to windward, her bows did not enter the rolling waters until the hidden rocks which caused the commotion had been passed. The yielding vessel rose and fell in the agitated water, as if in homage to the whirlpool; but the deep keel was unharmed.

"If the ship shoot ahead twice her length more, her bows will touch the eddy!" exclaimed the vigilant master.

Ludlow looked around him for a single moment in indecision. The waters were whirling and roaring on every side, and the sails began to lose their power, as the ship drew near the bluff which forms the second angle in this critical pass. He saw, by objects on the land, that he still

approached the shore, and he had recourse to the seaman's last expedient.

"Let go both anchors!" was the final order.

The fall of the massive iron into the water was succeeded by the rumbling of the cable. The first effort to check the progress of the vessel appeared to threaten dissolution to the whole fabric, which trembled under the shock from its mastheads to the keel. But the enormous rope again yielded, and smoke was seen rising round the wood which held it. The ship whirled with the sudden check, and sheered wildly in toward the shore. Met by the helm, and again checked by the efforts of the crew, she threatened to defy restraint. There was an instant when all on board expected to hear the cable snap; but the upper sails filled, and as the wind was now brought over the taffrail, the force of the current was in a great degree met by that of the breeze.

The ship answered her helm and became stationary, while the water foamed against her cutwater, as if she were driven ahead with the power of a brisk breeze.

The time, from the moment when the *Coquette* entered the Gate, to that when she anchored below "the Pot," though the distance was near a mile, seemed but a minute. Certain, however, that his ship was now checked, the thoughts of Ludlow returned to their other duties with the quickness of lightning,

"Clear away the grapnels," he eagerly cried, "stand by to heave, and haul in!—heave!"

But, that the reader may better comprehend the motive of this sudden order, he must consent to return to the entrance of the dangerous passage, and accompany the *Water-Witch* also, in her hazardous experiment to get through without a pilot.

The abortive attempt of the brigantine to stem the tide of the western end of Blackwell's will be remembered. It had no other effect than to place her pursuer more in advance, and to convince her own commander that he had now no other resource than to continue his course; for, had he anchored, boats would have insured his capture. When the two vessels appeared off the eastern end of the island, the *Coquette* was ahead—a fact that the experienced freetrader did not at all regret. He profited by the circumstance to follow her movements, and to make a favorable entrance into the uncertain currents. To him, Hell-Gate was known only by its fearful reputation among mariners; and unless he might avail himself of the presence of the cruiser, he had no other guide than his own general knowledge of the power of the element.

When the *Coquette* had tacked, the calm and observant Skimmer was satisfied with throwing his head-sails flat to the mast. From that instant, the brigantine lay floating in the current, neither advancing nor receding a foot, and always keeping her position at a safe distance from the ship that was so adroitly made to answer the purposes of a beacon. The sails were watched with the closest care, and so nicely was the delicate machine tended, that it would have been, at any moment, in her people's power to have lessened her way, by turning to the stream. The *Coquette* was followed till she anchored, and the call on board the cruiser to heave the grapnels had been given, because the brigantine was apparently floating directly down on her broadside.

When the grapnels were hove from the royal cruiser, the freetrader stood on the low poop of his little vessel, within fifty feet of him who had issued the order. There was a smile of indifference on his firm mouth, while he silently waved a hand to his own crew. The signal was obeyed by bracing round their yards, and suffering all the canvas to fill. The brigantine shot quickly ahead, and the useless irons fell heavily into the water.

"Many thanks for your pilotage, Captain Ludlow!" cried the daring and successful mariner of the shawl, as his vessel, borne on by wind and current, receded rapidly from the cruiser. "You will find me off Montauk; for affairs still keep us on the coast. Our lady has, however, put on the blue mantle; and ere many settings of the sun we shall look for deep water. Take good care of her Majesty's ship, I

pray thee, for she has neither a more beautiful nor a faster!"

One thought succeeded another with the tumult of a torrent, in the mind of Ludlow. As the brigantine lay directly under his broadside, the first impulse was to use his guns; at the next moment he was conscious that before they could be cleared distance would render them useless. His lips had nearly parted with intent to order the cables cut, but he remembered the speed of the brigantine and hesitated. A sudden freshening of the breeze decided his course. Finding that the ship was enabled to keep her station, he ordered the crew to thrust the whole of the enormous ropes through the hawse-holes; and, freed from the restraint, he abandoned the anchors until an opportunity to reclaim them should offer.

The operation of slipping the cables consumed several minutes; and when the *Coquette*, with everything set, was again steering in pursuit, the *Water-Witch* was already beyond the reach of her guns. Both vessels, however, held on their way, keeping as near as possible to the center of the stream, and trusting more to fortune, than to any knowledge of the channel, for safety.

When passing the two small islands that lie at no great distance from the Gate, a boat was seen moving toward the royal cruiser. A man in it pointed to the signal, which was still flying, and offered his services.

"Tell me," demanded Ludlow, eagerly, "has yonder brigantine taken a pilot?"

"By her movements, I judge not. She brushed the sunken rock, off the mouth of Flushing bay; and as she passed, I heard the song of the lead. I should have gone on board myself, but the fellow rather flies than sails; and as for signals, he seems to mind none but his own."

"Bring us up with him, and fifty guineas is thy reward!"

The slow-moving pilot, who in truth had just awaked from a refreshing sleep, opened his eyes, and seemed to gather a new impulse from the promise. When his questions were asked and answered, he began deliberately to count on his fingers all the chances that still existed of a vessel, whose crew was ignorant of the navigation, falling into their hands.

"Admitting that, by keeping mid-channel, she goes clear of White Stone and Frogs," he said, giving to Throgmorton's its vulgar name, "he must be a wizard, to know that the Stepping-Stones lie directly across his course, and that a vessel must steer away northerly, or bring up on rocks that will as surely hold him as if he were built there. Then he runs his chance for the Executioners, which are as prettily placed as needs be, to make our trade flourish; besides the Middle Ground farther east, though I count but little on that, having often tried to find it myself, without success. Courage, noble Captain! if the fellow be the man you say, we shall get a nearer look at him before the sun sets; for certainly he who has run the Gate without a pilot in safety, has had as much good luck as can fall to his share in one day."

The opinion of the East River Branch proved erroneous. Notwithstanding the hidden perils by which she was environed, the *Water-Witch* continued her course, with a speed that increased as the wind rose with the sun, and with an impunity from harm that amazed all who were in the secret of her situation. Off Throgmorton's there was, in truth, a danger that might even have baffled the sagacity of the followers of the mysterious lady, had they not been aided by accident. This is the point where the straightened arm of the sea expands into the basin of the Sound. A broad and inviting passage lies directly before the navigator, while, like the flattering prospects of life, numberless hidden obstacles are in wait to arrest the unheeding and ignorant.

The Skimmer of the Seas was deeply practiced in all the intricacies and dangers of shoals and rocks. Most of his life had been passed in threading the one or in avoiding the other. So keen and quick had his eye become, in detecting the presence of any of those signs which forewarn the mariner of danger, that a ripple on the surface, or a deeper shade in the color of the water, rarely escaped his vigilance

Seated on the topsail-yard of his brigantine, he had overlooked the passage from the moment they were through the Gate, and issued his mandates to those below with a precision and promptitude that were not surpassed by the trained conductor of the *Coquette* himself. But when his sight embraced the wide reach of water that lay in front, as his little vessel swept round the headland of Throgmorton, he believed there no longer existed a reason for so much care. Still there was a motive for hesitation. A heavily-molded and dull-sailing coaster was going eastward not a league ahead of the brigantine, while one of the light sloops of those waters was coming westward still farther in the distance. Notwithstanding the wind was favorable to each alike, both vessels had deviated from the direct line, and were steering toward a common center, near an island that was placed more than a mile to the northward of the straight course. A mariner, like him of the Indian-shawl, could not overlook so obvious an intimation of a change in the channel. The *Water-Witch* was kept away, and her lighter sails were lowered, in order to allow the royal cruiser, whose lofty canvas was plainly visible above the land, to draw near. When the *Coquette* was seen also to diverge, there no longer remained a doubt of the direction necessary to be taken; and everything was quickly set upon the brigantine, even to her studding-sails. Long ere she reached the island, the two coasters had met, and each again changed its course, reversing that on which the other had just been sailing. There was in these movements as plain an explanation as a seaman could desire that the pursued were right. On reaching the island, therefore, they again luffed into the wake of the schooner, and having nearly crossed the sheet of water, they passed the coaster, receiving an assurance, in words, that all was now plain sailing before them.

Such was the famous passage of the Skimmer of the Seas through the multiplied and hidden dangers of the eastern channel. To those who have thus accompanied him, step by step, through its intricacies and alarms, there may seem nothing extraordinary in the event; but, coupled as it was with the character previously earned by that bold mariner, and occurring as it did in an age when men were more disposed than at present to put faith in the marvelous, the reader will not be surprised to learn that it greatly increased his reputation for daring, and had no small influence on an opinion, which was by no means uncommon, that the dealers in contraband were singularly favored by a power which greatly exceeded that of Queen Anne and all her servants.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Thou shalt see me at Philippi."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE commander of her Britannic Majesty's ship *Coquette* slept that night in the hammock-cloths. Before the sun set, the light and swift brigantine, by following the gradual bend of the land, had disappeared in the eastern board; and it was no longer a question of overtaking her by speed. Still sail was crowded on the royal cruiser; and long ere the period when Ludlow threw himself in his clothes between the ridge-ropes of the quarter-deck, the vessel had gained the broadest part of the Sound, and was already approaching the islands that form the "Race."

Throughout the whole of that long and anxious day, the young sailor had held no communication with the inmates of the cabin. The servants of the ship had passed to and fro; but though the door seldom opened that he did not bend his eyes feverishly in that direction, neither the Alderman, his niece, the captive, nor even Francois, or the negress, made their appearance on deck. If any there felt an interest in the result of the chase, it was concealed in a profound and almost mysterious silence. Determined not to be outdone in indifference, and goaded by feelings which with all his pride he could not overcome, our young seaman took possession of the place of rest we have mentioned without using any measures to resume the intercourse.

When the first watch of the night was come, sail was shortened on the ship, and from that moment till the day dawned again her Captain seemed buried in sleep. With the appearance of the sun, however, he arose, and commanded the canvas to be spread once more, and every exertion made to drive the vessel forward to her object.

The *Coquette* reached the Race early in the day, and shooting though the passage on an ebb-tide, she was off Montauk at noon. No sooner had the ship drawn past the cape, and reached a point where she felt the breeze and the waves of the Atlantic, than men were sent aloft, and twenty eyes were curiously employed in examining the offing. Ludlow remembered the promise of the Skimmer to meet him at that spot; and notwithstanding the motives which the latter might be supposed to have for avoiding the interview, so great was the influence of the free-trader's manner and character, that the young Captain entertained a secret expectation the promise would be kept.

"The offing is clear!" said the young Captain, in a tone of disappointment, when he lowered his glass; "yet that rover does not seem a man to hide his head in fear——"

"Fear—that is to say, fear of a Frenchman—and a decent respect for her Majesty's cruisers, are very different sorts of things," returned the master. "I never got a bandanna or a bottle of your Cognac ashore in my life that I did not think every man that I passed in the street could see the spots in the one, or scent the flavor of the other; but then I never supposed this shyness amounted to more than a certain suspicion in my own mind that other people know when a man is running on an illegal course. I suppose that one of your rectors, who is snugly anchored for life in a good warm living, would call this conscience; but for my own part, Captain Ludlow, though no great logician in matters of this sort, I have always believed that it was natural concern of mind lest the articles should be seized. If this Skimmer of the Seas comes out to give us another chase in rough water, he is by no means as good a judge of the difference between a large and a small vessel as I had thought him—and I confess, sir, I should have more hopes of taking him were the woman under his bowsprit fairly burned."

"The offing is clear."

"That it is, with a show of the wind holding here at south-half-south. The bit of water that we have passed, between yon island and the main, is lined with bays; and while we are looking out for them on the high seas, the cunning varlets may be treading in any one of the fifty good basins that lie between the cape and the place where we lost him. For aught we know, he may have run westward again in the night watches, and be at this moment laughing in his sleeve at the manner in which he dodged the cruiser."

"There is too much truth in what you say, Trysail; for if the Skimmer be now disposed to avoid us, he has certainly the means in his power."

"Sail ho!" cried the lookout on the main-topgallant-yard.

"Where away?"

"Broad on the weather-beam, sir; here, in a range with the light cloud that is just lifting from the water."

"Can you make out the rig?"

"'Fore George, the fellow is right!" interrupted the master. "The cloud caused her to be unseen, but here she is, sure enough—a full-rigged ship under easy canvas, with her head to the westward."

The look of Ludlow through the glass was long, attentive and grave.

"We are weak-handed to deal with a stranger," he said, when he returned the instrument to Trysail. "You see he has nothing but his topsails set—a show of canvas that would satisfy no trader in a breeze like this!"

The master was silent, but his look was even longer and more critical than that of his Captain. When it had ended, he cast a cautious glance toward the diminished crew, who were curiously regarding the vessel that had now become sufficiently distinct by a change in the position of the cloud, and then answered in an undertone.

"'Tis a Frenchman, or I am a whale! One may see it by his short yards and the hoist of his sails, aye, and 'tis a cruiser, too, for no man who had a profit to make on his freight would be lying there under short canvas and his port within a day's run."

"Your opinion is my own; would to heaven our people were all here! This is but a short complement to take into action with a ship whose force seems equal to our own. What number can we count?"

"We are short of seventy—a small muster for four-and-twenty guns with yards like these to handle."

"And yet the port may not be insulted! We are known to be on this coast——"

"We are seen!" interrupted the master. "The fellow has wore ship, and he is already setting his topgallant-sails."

There no longer remained any choice between downright flight and preparations for combat. The former would have been easy, for an hour would have taken the ship within the cape; but the latter was far more in consonance with the spirit of the service to which the *Coquette* belonged. The order was given, therefore, for "all hands to clear ship for action!" It was in the reckless nature of sailors to exult in this summons; for success and audacity go hand in hand, and long familiarity with the first had, even at that early day, given a confidence that often approached temerity to the seamen of Great Britain and her dependencies. The mandate to prepare for battle was received by the feeble crew of the *Coquette* as it had often been received before when her decks were filled with the number necessary to give full efficiency to her armament; though a few of the older and more experienced mariners, men in whom confidence had been diminished by time, were seen to shake their heads, as if they doubted the prudence of the intended contest.

Whatever might have been the secret hesitation of Ludlow when the character and force of his enemies were clearly established, he betrayed no signs of irresolution from the moment when his decision appeared to be taken. The necessary orders were issued calmly and with the clearness and readiness that perhaps constitute the greatest merit of a naval captain. The yards were hung in chains; the booms were sent down; the lofty sails were furled, and, in short, all the preparations that were then customary were made with the usual promptitude and skill. Then the drum beat to quarters, and when the people were at their stations, their young commander had a better opportunity of examining into the true efficiency of his ship.

Calling to the master he ascended the poop, in order that they might confer together with less risk of being overheard, and at the same time better observe the maneuvers of the enemy.

The stranger had, as Trysail perceived, suddenly wore round on his heel and laid his head to the northward. The change in the course brought him before the wind, and, as he immediately spread all the canvas that would draw, he was approaching fast. During the time occupied in preparation on board the *Coquette*, his hull had risen as it were from out of the water, and Ludlow and his companion had not studied his appearance long from the poop before the streak of white paint, dotted with ports, which marks a vessel of war, became visible to the naked eye. As the cruiser of Queen Anne continued also to steer in the direction of the chase, half an hour more brought them sufficiently near to each other to remove all doubts of their respective characters and force. The stranger then came to the wind and made his preparations for combat.

"The fellow shows a stout heart and a warm battery," observed the master, when the broadside of the enemy became visible by this change in his position. Six-and-twenty teeth, by my count! though the eye-teeth must be wanting, or he would never be so foolhardy as to brave Queen Anne's *Coquette* in this impudent fashion! A prettily turned boat, Captain Ludlow, and one nimble enough in her movements. But look at his topsails. Just like his character, sir, all hoist; and with little or no head to them. I'll not deny but the hull is well enough, for that

is no more than carpenter's work; but when it comes to the rig, or trim, or cut of a sail, how should a L'Orient or a Brest man understand what is comely? There is no equaling, after all, a good, wholesome, honest English topsail, which is neither too narrow in the head, nor too deep in the hoist, with a bolt-rope of exactly the true size, robands and earrings and bowlines that look as if they grew there, and sheets that neither nature nor art could alter to advantage. Here are these Americans, now, making innovations in ship-building, and in the sparring of vessels, as if anything could be gained by quitting the customs and opinions of their ancestors! Any man may see that all they have about them that is good for anything is English, while all their nonsense and new-fangled changes come from their own vanity."

"They get along, Master Trysail, notwithstanding," returned the Captain, who, though a sufficiently loyal subject, could not forget his birthplace; "and many is the time this ship, one of the finest models of Plymouth, has been bothered to overhaul the coasters of these seas. Here is the brigantine that has laughed at us on our best tack, and with our choice of wind."

"One cannot say where that brigantine was built, Captain Ludlow. It may be here, it may be there; for I look upon her as a nondescript, as old Admiral Top used to call the galiots of the north seas; but, concerning these new American fashions, of what use are they, I would ask, Captain Ludlow? In the first place they are neither English nor French, which is as much as to confess they are altogether outlandish; in the second place, they disturb the harmony and established usages among wrights and sailmakers, and, though they may get along well enough now, sooner or later, take my word for it, they will come to harm. It is unreasonable to suppose that a new people can discover anything in the construction of a ship that has escaped the wisdom of seamen as old —the Frenchman is clewing up his topgallant-sails, and means to let them hang, which is much the same as condemning them at once—and, therefore, I am of opinion that all these new fashions will come to no good."

"Your reasoning is absolutely conclusive, Master Trysail," returned the Captain, whose thoughts were differently employed. "I agree with you, it would be safer for the stranger to send down his yards."

"There is something manly and becoming in seeing a ship strip herself as she comes into action, sir! It is like a boxer taking off his jacket, with the intention of making a fair stand-up fight for it. The fellow is filling away again, and means to maneuver before he comes fairly to his work."

The eye of Ludlow had never quitted the stranger. He saw that the moment for serious action was not distant; and bidding Trysail keep the vessel on her course, he descended to the quarter-deck. For a single instant, the young commander paused, with his hand on the door of the cabin; then, overcoming his reluctance, he entered the apartment.

The *Coquette* was built after a fashion much in vogue a century since, and which, by a fickleness that influences marine architecture as well as less important things, is again coming into use for vessels of her force. The accommodations of the commander were on the same deck with the batteries of the ship, and they were frequently made to contain two or even four guns of the armament. When Ludlow entered his cabin, therefore, he found a crew stationed around the gun which was placed on the side next the enemy, and all the customary arrangements made which precede a combat. The staterooms abaft, however, as well as the little apartment which lay between them, were closed. Glancing his eye about him, and observing the carpenters in readiness, he made a signal for them to knock away the bulkheads, and lay the whole of the fighting part of the ship in common. While this duty was going on, he entered the after-cabin.

Admiral Van Beverout and his companions were found together, and evidently in expectation of the visit they now

received. Passing coolly by the former, Ludlow approached his niece, and, taking her hand, he led her to the quarter-deck, making a sign for her female attendant to follow. Descending into the depths of the ship, the Captain conducted his charge into a part of the berth-deck that was below the water-line, and as much removed from danger as she could well be without encountering a foul air, or sights that might be painful to one of her sex and habits.

"Here is as much safety as a vessel of war affords in a moment like this," he said, when his companion was silently seated on a mess-chest. "On no account quit the spot, till I—or some other—advise you it may be done without hazard."

Alida had submitted to be led thither without a question. Though her color went and came, she saw the little dispositions that were made for her comfort, and without which, even at that moment, the young sailor could not quit her, in the same silence. But when they were ended, and her conductor was about to retire, his name escaped her by an exclamation that seemed hurried and involuntary.

"Can I do aught else to quiet your apprehensions?" the young man inquired, though he studiously avoided her eye, as he turned to put the question. "I know your strength of mind, and that you have a resolution which exceeds the courage of your sex; else I would not venture so freely to point out the danger which may beset one, even here, without a self-command and discretion that shall restrain all sudden impulses of fear."

"Notwithstanding your generous interpretation of my character, Ludlow, I am but a woman after all."

"I did not mistake you for an Amazon," returned the young man, smiling, perceiving that she checked her words by a sudden effort. "All I expect from you is the triumph of reason over female terror. I shall not conceal that the odds—perhaps I may say that the chances are against us; yet the enemy must pay for the ship ere he has her! She will be none the worst defended, Alida, from the consciousness that thy liberty and comfort depend in some measure on our exertions. Would you say more?"

Le belle Barberie struggled with herself, and she became calm, at least in exterior.

"There has been a singular misconception between us, yet is this no moment for explanation! Ludlow, I would not have you part with me, at such a time as this, with that cold and reproachful eye!"

She paused. When the young man ventured to raise his look, he saw the beautiful girl standing with a hand extended toward him, as if offering a pledge of amity; while the crimson on her cheek, and her yielding but half-averted eye, spoke with the eloquence of maiden modesty. Seizing the hand, he answered, hastily—

"Time was when this action would have made me happy——"

The young man paused, for his gaze had unconsciously become riveted on the rings of the hand he held. Alida understood the look, and, drawing one of the jewels, she offered it with a smile that was as attractive as her beauty.

"One of these may be spared," she said. "Take it, Ludlow; and when thy present duty shall be performed, return it, as a gage that I have promised that no explanation which you have a right to ask shall be withheld."

The young man took the ring and forced it on the smallest of his fingers, in a mechanical manner, and with a bewildered look that seemed to inquire if some one of those which remained was not the token of a plighted faith. It is probable that he might have continued the discourse, had not a gun been fired from the enemy. It recalled him to the more serious business of the hour. Already more than half disposed to believe all he could wish, he raised the fair hand, which had just bestowed the boon, to his lips, and rushed upon the deck.

"The Monsieur is beginning to bluster," said Trysail, who had witnessed the descent of his commander, at that moment and on such an errand, with great dissatisfaction. "Although his shot fell short, it is too much to let a Frenchman have the credit of the first word."

"He has merely given the weather gun, the signal of defiance. Let him come down, and he will not find us in a hurry to leave him!"

"No, no; as for that, we are snug enough!" returned the master, chuckling as he surveyed the half-naked spars, and the light top hamper, to which he had himself reduced the ship. "If running is to be our play, we have made a false move at the beginning of the game. These topsails, spanker, and jib, make a show that says more for bottom than for speed. Well, come what will of this affair, it will leave me a master, though it is beyond the power of the best duke in England to rob me of my share of the honor!"

With this consolation for his perfectly hopeless condition as respects promotion, the old seaman walked forward, examining critically into the state of the vessel; while his young commander, having cast a look about him, motioned to his prisoner and the Alderman to follow to the poop.

"I do not pretend to inquire into the nature of the tie which unites you with some in this ship," Ludlow commenced, addressing his words to Seadrift, though he kept his gaze on the recent gift of Alida; "but, that it must be strong, is evident by the interest they have taken in your fate. One who is thus esteemed should set a value on himself. How far you have trifled with the laws, I do not wish to say; but here is an opportunity to redeem some of the public favor. You are a seaman, and need not be told that my ship is not as strongly manned as one could wish her at this moment, and that the services of every Englishman will be welcome. Take charge of these six guns, and depend on my honor that your devotion to the flag shall not go unrequited."

"You much mistake my vocation, noble Captain," returned the dealer in contraband, faintly laughing. "Though one of the seas, I am one more used to the calm latitudes than to these whirlwinds of war. You have visited the brigantine of our mistress, and must have seen that her temple resembles that of Janus more than that of Mars. The deck of the *Water-Witch* has none of this frowning garniture of artillery."

Ludlow listened in amazement. Surprise, incredulity, and scorn, were each in turn expressed in his frowning countenance.

"This is unbecoming language for one of your calling," he said, scarce deeming it necessary to conceal the contempt he felt. "Do you acknowledge fealty to this ensign—are you an Englishman?"

"I am such as Heaven was pleased to make me—fitter for the zephyr than the gale—the jest than the war-shout—the merry moment than the angry mood."

"Is this the man whose name for daring has passed into a proverb?—the dauntless, reckless, skillful Skimmer of the Seas!"

"North is not more removed from south than I am from him in the qualities you seek! It was not my duty to undeceive you as to the value of your captive, while he whose services are beyond price to our mistress was still on the coast. So far from being him you name, brave Captain, I claim to be no more than one of his agents, who having some experience in the caprices of women, he trusts to recommend his wares to female fancies. Though so useless in inflicting injuries, I may make bold, however, to rate myself as excellent at consolation. Suffer that I appease the fears of la belle Barberie during the coming tumult, and you shall own that one more skillful in that merciful office is rare."

"Comfort whom, where, and what thou wilt, miserable effigy of manhood!—but hold, there is less of terror than of artifice in that lurking smile and treacherous eye!"

"Discredit both, generous Captain! On the faith of one who can be sincere at need, a wholesome fear is uppermost, whatever else the disobedient member may betray. I could fain weep rather than be thought valiant just now!"

Ludlow listened in wonder. He had raised an arm to arrest the retreat of the young mariner, and by a natural movement his hand slid along the limb it had grasped, until it held that of Sea-

drift. The instant he touched the soft and ungloved palm, an idea, as novel as it was sudden, crossed his brain. Retreating a step or two, he examined the light and agile form of the other, from head to feet. The frown of displeasure, which had clouded his brow, now changed to a look of unfeigned surprise; and for the first time the tones of the voice came over his recollection as being softer and more melodious than is wont in man.

"Truly, thou art not the Skimmer of the Seas!" he exclaimed, when his short examination was ended.

"No truth more certain. I am one of little account in this rude encounter, though were that gallant seaman here," and the color deepened on the cheeks of Seadrift as he spoke, "his arm and counsel might prove a host! Oh! I have seen him in scenes far more trying than this, when the elements have conspired with other dangers. The example of his steadiness and spirit has given courage even to the feeblest heart in the brigantine! Now, let me to offer consolation to the timid Alida."

"I should little merit her gratitude, were the request refused," returned Ludlow. "Go, gay and gallant Master Seadrift! if the enemy fears thy presence on the deck as little as I dread it with la belle Barberie, thy services here will be useless!"

Seadrift colored to the temples, crossed his arms meekly on his bosom, sank in an attitude of leave-taking that was so equivocal as to cause the attentive and critical young Captain to smile, and then glided past him and disappeared through a hatch-way.

The eye of Ludlow followed the active and graceful form, while it continued in sight; and when it was no longer visible, he faced the Alderman, with a look which seemed to inquire how far he might be acquainted with the true character of the individual who had been the cause of so much pain to himself.

"Have I done well, sir, in permitting a subject of Queen Anne to quit us at this emergency?" he demanded, observing that either the phlegm or the self-command of Myndert rendered him proof to scrutiny.

"The lad may be termed contraband of war," returned the Alderman, without moving a muscle; "an article that will command a better price in a quiet than in a turbulent market. In short, Captain Cornelius Ludlow, this Master Seadrift will not answer thy purpose at all in combat."

"And is this example of heroism to go any farther, or may I count on the assistance of Mr. Alderman Van Beverout? He has the reputation of a loyal citizen."

"As for loyalty," returned the Alderman, "so far as saying 'God bless the Queen,' at city feasts, will go, none are more so. A wish is not an expensive return for the protection of her fleets and armies, and I wish her and you success against the enemy, with all my heart. But I never admired the manner in which the States-General were dispossessed of their possessions on this continent, Master Ludlow, and therefore I pay the Stuarts little more than I owe them in law."

"Which is as much as to say, that you will join the gay smuggler in administering consolation to one whose spirit places her above the need of such succor."

"Not so fast, young gentleman. We mercantile men like to see offsets in our books, before they are balanced. Whatever may be my opinion of the reigning family, which I only utter to you in confidence, and not as coin that is to pass from hand to hand, my love for the Grand Monarque is still less. Louis is at loggerheads with the United Provinces, as well as with our gracious Queen; and I see no harm in opposing one of his cruisers, since they certainly annoy trade, and render returns for investments inconveniently uncertain. I have heard artillery in my time, having in my younger days led a band of city volunteers in many a march and countermarch around the Bowling Green; and for the honor of the Second Ward of the good town of Manhattan, I am now ready to undertake to show that all knowledge of the art has not entirely departed from me."

"That is a manly answer, and, provided it be sustained by a corresponding countenance, there shall be no impertinent inquiry into motives. 'Tis the officer that makes the ship victorious; for, when he sets a good example and understands his duty, there is little fear of the men. Choose your position among any of these guns, and we will make an effort to disappoint yon servants of Louis, whether we do it as Englishmen, or only as the allies of the Seven Provinces."

Myndert descended to the quarter-deck, and having deliberately deposited his coat on the capstan, replaced his wig by a handkerchief, and tightened the buckle that did the office of suspenders, he squinted along the guns, with a certain air that served to assure the spectators he had at least no dread of the recoil.

Alderman Van Beverout was a personage far too important not to be known by most of those who frequented the goodly town of which he was a civic officer. His presence, therefore, among the men, not a few of whom were natives of the colony, had a salutary effect; some yielding to the sympathy which is natural to a hearty and encouraging example, while it is possible there were a few that argued less of danger, in consequence of the indifference of a man who, being so rich, had so many motives to take good care of his person. Be this as it might, the burgher was received by a cheer which drew a short but pithy address from him, in which he exhorted his companions in arms to do their duty, in a manner which should teach the Frenchmen the wisdom of leaving that coast in future free from annoyance; while he wisely abstained from all the commonplace allusions to king and country—a subject to which he felt his inability to do proper justice.

"Let every man remember that cause for courage, which may be most agreeable to his own habits and opinions," concluded this imitator of the Hannibals and Scipios of old: "for that is the surest and the briefest method of bringing his mind into an obstinate state. In my own case, there is no want of motive; and I dare say each one of you may find some sufficient reason for entering heart and hand into this battle. Protests and credit! what would become of the affairs of the best house in the colonies were its principal to be led a captive to Brest or L'Orient? It might derange the business of the whole city. I'll not offend your patriotism with such a supposition, but at once believe that your minds are resolved, like my own, to resist to the last; for this is an interest which is general, as all questions of a commercial nature become through their influence on the happiness and prosperity of society."

Having terminated his address in so apposite and public-spirited a manner, the worthy burgher hemmed loudly, and resumed his accustomed silence, perfectly assured of his own applause. If the matter of Myndert's discourse wears too much the air of an undivided attention to his own interests, the reader will not forget it is by this concentration of individuality that most of the mercantile prosperity of the world is achieved.

The seamen listened with admiration, for they understood no part of the appeal, and, next to a statement which shall be so lucid as to induce every hearer to believe it is no more than a happy explanation of his own ideas, that which is unintelligible is apt to unite most suffrages in its favor.

"You see your enemy, and you know your work!" said the clear voice of Ludlow, who, as he passed among the people of the *Coquette*, spoke to them in that steady, unwavering tone which, in moments of danger, goes to the heart. "I shall not pretend that we are as strong as I could wish; but the greater the necessity for a strong pull, the readier a true seaman will be to give it. There are no nails in that ensign. When I am dead, you may pull it down if you please; but so long as I live, my men, there it shall fly! And now, one cheer to show your humor, and let the rest of your noise come from the guns."

The crew complied, with a full-mouthed and hearty hurrah! Trysail assured a young, laughing, careless midshipman, who even at that moment could enjoy an

uproar, that he had seldom heard a prettier piece of sea-eloquence than that which had just fallen from the Captain; it being both "neat and gentleman-like."

CHAPTER XXX.

"Sir, it is
A charge too heavy for my strength; but yet
We'll strive to bear it for your worthy sake,
To the extreme edge of hazard."
—ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

THE vessel, which appeared so inopportunely for the safety of the ill-manned British cruiser, was, in truth, a ship that had roved from among the islands of the Caribbean Sea in quest of some such adventure as that which now presented itself.

She was called *La Belle Fontange*, and her commander, a youth of two-and-twenty, was already well-known in the *salons* of the Marais and behind the walls of the Rue Basse des Remparts as one of the most gay and amiable of those who frequented the former, and one of the most spirited and skillful among the adventurers who sometimes trusted to their address in the latter. Rank and influence at Versailles had procured for the young Chevalier Dumont de la Rocheforte a command to which he could lay no claim either by his experience or his services. His mother, a near relative of one of the beauties of the court, had been commanded to use sea-bathing as a preventive against the consequences of the bite of a rabid lapdog.

By way of a suitable episode to the long description she was in the daily habit of writing to those whose knowledge of her new element was limited to the constant view of a few ponds and ditches teeming with carp, or an occasional glimpse of some of the turbid reaches of the Seine, she had vowed to devote her youngest child to Neptune! In due time, that is to say, while the poetic sentiment was at the access, the young chevalier was duly enrolled, and, in a time that greatly anticipated all regular and judicious preferment, he was placed in command of the corvette in question, and sent to the Indies to gain glory for himself and his country.

The Chevalier Dumont de la Rocheforte was brave, but his courage was not the calm and silent self-possession of a seaman. Like himself, it was lively, buoyant, thoughtless, bustling, and full of animal feeling. He had all the pride of a gentleman, and unfortunately for the duty which he had now for the first time to perform, one of its dictates taught him to despise that species of mechanical knowledge which it was, just at this moment, so important to the commander of *La Fontange* to possess. He could dance to admiration, did the honors of his cabin with faultless elegance, and had caused the death of an excellent mariner, who had accidently fallen overboard, by jumping into the sea to save him, without knowing how to swim a stroke himself—a rashness that had diverted those exertions which might have saved the unfortunate sailor from the assistance of the subordinate to the safety of his superior. He wrote sonnets prettily, and had some ideas of the new philosophy which was just then beginning to dawn upon the world; but the cordage of his ship, and the lines of a mathematical problem, equally presented labyrinths he had never threaded.

It was perhaps fortunate for the safety of all in her, that *La Belle Fontange* possessed an inferior officer, in the person of a native of Boulogne-sur-Mer, who was quite competent to see that she kept the proper course, and that she displayed none of the topgallants of her pride at unpropitious moments. The ship itself was sufficiently and finely molded, of a light and airy rig, and of established reputation for speed. If it was defective in anything, it had the fault, in common with its commander, of a want of sufficient solidity to resist the vicissitudes and dangers of the turbulent element on which it was destined to act.

The vessels were now within a mile of each other. The breeze was steady, and sufficiently fresh for all the evolutions of a naval combat, while the water was just quiet enough to permit the ships to be handled with confidence and accuracy. *La Fontange* was running with her head

to the eastward, and, as she had the advantage of the wind, her tall tracery of spars leaned gently in the direction of her adversary. The *Coquette* was standing on the other track, and necessarily inclined from her enemy. Both vessels were stripped to their topsails, spankers, and jibs, though the lofty sails of the Frenchman were fluttering in the breeze, like the graceful folds of some fanciful drapery. No human being was distinctly visible in either fabric, though dark clusters around each masthead showed that the ready topmen were prepared to discharge their duties, even in the confusion and dangers of the impending contest. Once or twice *La Fontange* inclined her head more in the direction of her adversary; then, sweeping again up to the wind, she stood on in stately beauty. The moment was near when the ships were about to cross each other, at a point where a musket would readily send its message across the water that lay between them. Ludlow, who closely watched each change of position, and every rise and fall of the breeze, went on the poop, and swept the horizon with his glass for the last time before his ship should be enveloped in smoke. To his surprise, he discovered a pyramid of canvas rising above the sea, in the direction of the wind. The sail was clearly visible to the naked eye, and had only escaped earlier observation in the duties of so urgent a moment. Calling the master to his side, he inquired his opinion concerning the character of the second stranger. But Trysail confessed it exceeded even his long-tried powers of observation, to say more than that it was a ship running before the wind, with a cloud of sail spread. After a second and a longer look, however, the experienced master ventured to add that the stranger had the squareness and symmetry of a cruiser, but of what size he would not yet presume to declare.

"It may be a light ship under her topgallant and studding-sails, or it may be that we see only the lofty duck of some heavier vessel. Captain Ludlow—ha! he has caught the eye of the Frenchman, for the corvette has signals abroad!"

"To your glass! If the stranger answer, we have no choice but our speed."

There was another keen and anxious examination of the upper spars of the distant ship, but the direction of the wind prevented any signs of her communicating with the corvette from being visible. *La Fontange* appeared equally uncertain of the character of the stranger, and for a moment there was some evidence of an intention to change her course. But the moment for indecision had passed. The ships were already sweeping up abreast of each other under the constant pressure of the breeze.

"Be ready, men!" said Ludlow, in a low but firm voice, retaining his elevated position on the poop, while he motioned to his companion to return to the main-deck. "Fire at his flash!"

Intense expectation succeeded. The two graceful fabrics sailed steadily on, and came within hail. So profound was the stillness in the *Coquette*, that the rushing sound of the water she heaped under her bows was distinctly audible to all on board, and might be likened to the deep breathing of some vast animal that was collecting its physical energies for some unusual exertion. On the other hand, tongues were loud and clamorous among the cordage of *La Fontange*. Just as the ships were fairly abeam the voice of young Dumont was heard shouting through a trumpet for his men to fire. Ludlow smiled in a seaman's scorn. Raising his own trumpet, with a quiet gesture to his attentive and ready crew, the whole discharge of their artillery broke out of the dark side of the ship as if it had been by the volition of the fabric. The answering broadside was received almost as soon as their own had been given, and the two vessels passed swiftly without the line of shot.

The wind had sent back their own smoke upon the English, and for a time it floated on their decks, wreathed itself in the eddies of the sails, and passed away to leeward, with the breeze that succeeded to the counter-current of the explosion. The whistling of shot and the crash of wood had been heard amid the din of the combat. Giving a glance at his enemy

who still stood on, Ludlow leaned from the poop, and, with a sailor's anxiety, he endeavored to scan the gear aloft.

"What is gone, sir?" he asked of Trysail, whose earnest face just then became visible through the drifting smoke. "What sail is so heavily flapping?"

"Little harm done, sir—little harm—bear a hand with the tackle on that fore-yardarm, you lubbers! you move like snails in a minuet! The fellow has shot away the lee-fore-topsail sheet, sir; but we shall soon get our wings spread again. Lash it down, boys, as if it were butt-bolted—so; steady out your bowline forward. Meet her, you can; meet her, you may—meet her!"

The smoke had disappeared, and the eye of the Captain rapidly scanned the whole of his ship. Three or four topmen had already caught the flapping canvas, and were seated on the extremity of the fore-yard, busied in securing their prize. A hole or two was visible in the other sails, and here and there an unimportant rope was dangling in a manner to show that it had been cut by shot. Farther than this, the damage aloft was not of a nature to attract his attention.

There was a different scene on deck. The feeble crew were earnestly occupied in loading the guns, and rammers and sponges were handled with all the intenseness which men would manifest in a moment so exciting. The Alderman was never more absorbed in his ledger than he now appeared in his duty of a cannoneer; and the youths, to whom the command of the batteries had necessarily been confided, diligently aided him with their greater authority and experience. Trysail stood near the capstan, coolly giving the orders which have been related, and gazing upward with an interest so absorbed as to render him unconscious of all that passed around his person. Ludlow saw with pain that blood discolored the deck at his feet, and that a seaman lay dead within reach of his arm. The rent plank and shattered ceiling showed the spot where the destructive missile had entered.

Compressing his lips like a man resolved, the commander of the *Coquette* bent farther forward, and glanced at the wheel. The quartermastsr, who held the spokes, was erect, steady, and kept his eye on the leach of the head-sail as unerringly as the needle points to the pole.

These were the observations of a single minute. The different circumstances related had been ascertained with so many rapid glances of the eye, and they had even been noted without losing for a moment the knowledge of the precise situation of *La Fontange*. The latter was already in stays. It became necessary to meet the evolution by another as prompt.

The order was no sooner given than the *Coquette*, as if conscious of the hazard she ran of being raked, whirled away from the wind, and, by the time her adversary was ready to deliver her other broadside, she was in a position to return it. Again the ships approached each other, and once more they exchanged their streams of fire when abeam.

Ludlow now saw, through the smoke, the ponderous yard of *La Fontange* swinging against the breeze, and the main-topsail come flapping against her mast. Swinging off from the poop by a backstay that had been shot away a moment before, he alighted on the quarter-deck by the side of the master.

"Touch all the braces!" he said lustily, but still speaking low and clearly; "give a drag upon the bowlines—luff, sir, luff, jam the ship up hard against the wind!"

The clear steady answer of the quartermaster and the manner in which the *Coquette*, still vomiting her sheets of flame, inclined toward the breeze, announced the promptitude of the subordinates. In another minute, the vast volumes of smoke which enveloped the two ships joined, and formed one white and troubled cloud, which was rolling swiftly before the explosions, over the surface of the sea, but which, as it rose higher in the air, sailed gracefully to the leeward.

Our young commander passed swiftly through the batteries, spoke encouragingly to his people, and resumed his post on the poop. The stationary position of *La Fontange*, and his own efforts to get to windward, were already proving advan-

tageous to Queen Anne's cruiser. There was some indecision on the part of the other ship, which instantly caught the eye of one whose readiness in his profession so much resembled instinct.

The Chevalier Dumont had amused his leisure by running his eyes over the records of the naval history of his country, where he had found this and that commander applauded for throwing their topsails to the mast, abreast of their enemies. Ignorant of the difference between a ship in line and one engaged singly, he had determined to show himself equal to a similar display of spirit. At the moment when Ludlow was standing alone on the poop, watching with vigilant eyes the progress of his own vessel, and the position of his enemy, indicating merely by a look or a gesture, to the attentive Trysail beneath, what he wished done, there was actually a wordy discussion on the quarter-deck of the latter, between the mariner of Boulogne-sur-Mer and the gay favorite of the salons. They debated on the expediency of the step which the latter had taken to prove the existence of a quality that no one doubted. The time lost in this difference of opinion was of the last importance to the British cruiser. Standing gallantly on, she was soon out of the range of her adversary's fire; and, before Boulognois had succeeded in convincing his superior of his error, their antagonist was on the other tack, and luffing across the wake of *La Fontagne*. The topsail was then tardily filled, but before the latter ship had recovered her motion, the sails of her enemy overshadowed her deck. There was now every prospect of the *Coquette* passing to the windward. At that critical moment, the fairsetting topsail of the British cruiser was nearly rent in two by a shot. The ship fell off, the yards interlocked and the vessels were foul.

The *Coquette* had all the advantage of position. Perceiving the important fact at a glance, Ludlow made sure of its continuance by throwing grapnels. When the two ships were thus firmly lashed together, the young Dumont found himself relieved from a mountain of embarrassment. Sufficiently justified by the fact that not a single gun of his own would bear, while a murderous discharge of grape had just swept along his decks, he issued the order to board. But Ludlow with his weakened crew had not decided on so hazardous an evolution as that which brought him in absolute contact with his enemy without foreseeing the means of avoiding all the consequences.

The vessels touched each other only at one point, and this spot was protected by a row of muskets. No sooner, therefore, did the impetuous young Frenchman appear on the taffrail of his own ship, supported by a band of followers, than a close and deadly fire swept them away to a man. Young Dumont alone remained. For a single moment his eye glared wildly; but the active frame, still obedient to the governing impulse of so impetuous a spirit, leaped onward. He fell, without life, on the deck of his enemy.

Ludlow watched every movement, with a calmness that neither personal responsibility, nor the uproar and rapid incidents of the terrible scene could discompose.

"Now is our time to bring the matter hand to hand!" he cried, making a gesture to Trysail to descend from the ladder, in order that he might pass.

His arm was arrested, and the grave old master pointed to windward.

"There is no mistaking the cut of those sails, or the lofty rise of the spars. The stranger is another Frenchman!"

One glance told Ludlow that his subordinate was right; another sufficed to show what was necessary.

"Cast loose the forward grapnel—cut it—away with it, clear!" was shouted, through his trumpet, in a voice that rose commanding and clear amid the roar of the combat.

Released forward, the stern of the *Coquette* yielded to the pressure of her enemy, whose sails were all drawing, and she was soon in a position to enable her head-yards to be braced sharp aback, in a direction opposite to the one in which she had so lately lain. The whole broadside was then delivered into the stern of *La Fontange*, the last grapnel was released, and the ships separated.

The single spirit which presided over the evolutions and exertions of the *Coquette* still governed her movements. The sails were trimmed, the ship was got in command, and, before the vessels had been asunder five minutes, the duty of the vessel was in its ordinary active but noiseless train.

Nimble topmen were on the yards, and broad folds of fresh canvas were flapping in the breeze, as the new sails were bent and set. Ropes were spliced, or supplied by new rigging, the spars examined, and, in fine, all that watchfulness and sedulous care were observed which are necessary to the efficiency and safety of a ship. Every spar was secured, the pumps were sounded, and the vessel held on her way, as steady as if she had never fired or received a shot.

On the other hand, *La Fontange* betrayed the indecision and confusion of a worsted ship. Her torn canvas was blowing about in disorder, many important ropes beat against her masts unheeded, and the vessel itself drove before the breeze in the helplessness of a wreck. For several minutes there seemed no controlling mind in the fabric; and when, after so much distance was lost as to give her enemy all the advantage of the wind, a tardy attempt was made to bring the ship up again, the tallest and most important of her masts was seen tottering, until it finally fell, with all its hamper, into the sea.

Notwithstanding the absence of so many of his people, success would now have been certain had not the presence of the stranger compelled Ludlow to abandon his advantage. But the consequences to his own vessel were too sure to allow of more than a natural and manly regret that so favorable an occasion should escape him. The character of the stranger could no longer be mistaken. The eye of every seaman in the *Coquette* as well understood the country of the high and narrow-headed sails, the tall taper masts, and short yards of the frigate whose hull was now distinctly visible, as a landsman recognizes an individual by the distinguishing marks of his features or attire. Had there been any lingering doubts on the subject, they would have all given place to certainty when the stranger was seen exchanging signals with the crippled corvette.

It was now time for Ludlow to come to a speedy determination on his future course. The breeze still held to the southward, but it was beginning to lessen, with every appearance that it would fail before nightfall.

The land lay a few leagues to the northward, and the whole horizon of the ocean, with the exception of the two French cruisers, was clear. Descending to the quarter-deck, he approached the master, who was seated in a chair while the surgeon dressed a severe hurt in one of his legs. Shaking the sturdy veteran cordially by the hand, he expressed his acknowledgments for his support in a moment so trying.

"God bless you! Captain Ludlow," returned the old sailor, dashing his hand equivocally across his weather-beaten brow. "Battle is certainly the place to try both ship and friends; and Heaven be praised! Queen Anne has not failed of either this day. No man has forgotten his duty, so far as my eyes have witnessed; and this is saying no trifle, with half a crew and an equal enemy. As for the ship, she never behaved better! I had my misgivings when I saw the new maintopsail go, which it did, as all here know like a bit of rent muslin between the fingers of a seamstress. Run forward, Mr. Hopper, and tell the men in the fore rigging to take another drag on that swifter and to be careful and bring the strain equal on all the shrouds. A lively youth, Captain Ludlow, and one who only wants a little reflection, with some more experience, and a small dash of modesty, together with the seamanship he will naturally get in time, to make a very tolerable officer."

"The boy promises well; but I have come to ask thy advice, my old friend, concerning our next movements. There is no doubt that the fellow who is coming down upon us is both a Frenchman and a frigate."

"A man might as well doubt the nature

of a fish-hawk, which is to pick up all the small fry and to let the big ones go. We might show him our canvas and try the open sea, but I fear that foremast is too weak with three such holes in it to bear the sail we shall need!"

"What think you of the wind?" said Ludlow, affecting an indecision he did not feel, in order to soothe the feelings of his wounded companion. "Should it hold, we might double Montauk, and return for the rest of our people; but should it fail, is there no danger that the frigate should tow within shot! We have no boats to escape her."

"The soundings on this coast are as regular as the roof of an out-house," said the master, after a moment of thought. "And it is my advice, if it is your pleasure to ask it, Captain Ludlow, that we shoal our water as much as possible while the wind lasts. Then I think we shall be safe from a very near visit from the big one. As for the corvette, I am of opinion that, like a man who has eaten his dinner, she has no stomach for another slice."

Ludlow applauded the advice of his subordinate, for it was precisely what he had determined on doing; and after again complimenting him on his coolness and skill, he issued the necessary orders. The helm of the *Coquette* was now placed hard a-weather, the yards were squared, and the ship was put before the wind. After running in this direction for a few hours, the wind gradually lessening, the lead announced that the keel was quite as near the bottom as the time of the tide and the dull heaving and setting of the element rendered at all prudent. The breeze soon after fell, and our young commander ordered an anchor to be dropped into the sea.

His example in the latter respect was imitated by the hostile cruisers. They had joined, and boats were seen passing from one to the other so long as there was light. When the sun fell behind the western margin of the ocean their dusky outlines, distant about a league, gradually grew less and less distinct, until the darkness of night enveloped sea and land in its gloom.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Now; the business!"—OTHELLO.

THREE hours later, and every voice was hushed on board the royal cruiser. The toil of repairing damages had ceased; and most of the living, with the dead, lay alike in common silence. The watchfulness necessary to the situation of the fatigued mariners, however, was not forgotten; and though so many slept, a few eyes were still open, affecting to be alert. Here and there some drowsy seaman paced the deck or a solitary young officer endeavored to keep himself awake by humming a low air in his narrow bounds. The mass of the crew slept heavily with pistols in their belts and cutlasses at their sides, between the guns. There was one figure extended upon the quarter-deck, with the head resting on a shot-box. The deep breathing of this person denoted the unquiet slumbers of a powerful frame, in which weariness contended with suffering. It was the wounded and feverish master, who had placed himself in that position to catch an hour of repose that was necessary to his situation. On an arm-chest which had been emptied of its contents lay another but a motionless human form, with the limbs composed in decent order, and with the face turned toward the melancholy stars. This was the body of young Dumont, which had been kept with the intention of consigning it to consecrated earth when the ship should return to port. Ludlow, with the delicacy of a generous and chivalrous enemy, had with his own hands spread the stainless ensign of his country over the remains of the inexperienced but gallant young Frenchman.

There was one little group on the raised deck in the stern of the vessel, in which the ordinary interests of life still seemed to exercise their influence. Hither Ludtow had led Alida and her companions, after the duties of the day were over, in order that they might breathe an air fresher than that of the interior of the vessel. The negress nodded near her young mistress; the tired Alderman sat

with his back supported against the mizzen-mast, giving audible evidence of his situation; and Ludlow stood erect, occasionally throwing an earnest look on the surrounding and unruffled waters, then lending his attention to the discourse of his companions. Alida and Seadrift were seated near each other, on chairs. The conversation was low, while the melancholy and the tremor in the voice of la belle Barberie denoted how much the events of the day had shaken her usually firm and spirited mind.

"There is a mingling of the terrific and the beautiful, of the grand and the seducing, in this unquiet profession of yours!" observed, or rather continued, Alida, replying to a previous remark of the young sailor. "That tranquil sea—the hollow sound of the surf on the shore—and this soft canopy above us, form objects on which even a girl might dwell in admiration, were not her ears still ringing with the roars and cries of the combat. Did you say the commander of the Frenchman was but a youth?"

"A mere boy in appearance, and one who doubtless owed his rank to the advantages of birth and family. We know it to be the captain by his dress, no less than by the desperate effort he made to recover the false step taken in the earlier part of the action."

"Perhaps he has a mother, Ludlow!—a sister—a wife—or——"

Alida paused, for with maiden diffidence she hesitated to pronounce the tie which was uppermost in her thoughts.

"He may have had one or all! Such are the sailor's hazards, and——"

"Such the hazards of those who feel an interest in their safety!" uttered the low but expressive voice of Seadrift.

An eloquent silence succeeded. Then the voice of Myndert was heard muttering distinctly, "Twenty of beaver, and three of marten—as per invoice."

The smile which, spite of the train of his thoughts, rose on the lips of Ludlow, had scarcely passed away, when the hoarse tones of Trysail, rendered still hoarser by his sleep, were plainly heard in a stifled cry, saying, "Bear a hand there with your stoppers! The Frenchman is coming round upon us again."

"That is prophetic!" said one, aloud, behind the listening group. Ludlow turned, quick as the flag fluttering on its vane, and through the darkness he recognized, in the motionless but manly form that stood before him on the poop, the fine person of the Skimmer of the Seas.

"Call away——"

"Call none!" interrupted Tiller, stopping the hurried order which involuntarily broke from the lips of Ludlow. "Let thy ship feign the silence of a wreck, but, in truth, let there be watchfulness and preparation even to her storeroom! You have done well, Captain Ludlow, to be on the alert, though I have known sharper eyes than those of some of your lookouts."

"Whence come you, audacious man, and what mad errand has brought you again to the deck of my ship!"

"I come from my habitation on the sea. My business here is warning!"

"The sea!" echoed Ludlow, gazing about him at the narrow and empty view. "The hour for mockery is past, and you would do well to trifle no more with those who have serious duties to discharge."

"The hour is indeed one for serious duties—duties more serious than any you apprehend. But before I enter on explanation, there must be conditions between us. You have one of the sea-green lady's servitors here; I claim his liberty for my secret."

"The error into which I had fallen exists no longer," returned Ludlow, looking for an instant toward the shrinking form of Seadrift. "My conquest is worthless, unless you come to supply his place."

"I come for other purposes—here is one who knows I do not trifle when urgent affairs are on hand. Let thy companions retire, that I may speak openly."

Ludlow hesitated, for he had not yet recovered from the surprise of finding the redoubtable freetrader so unexpectedly on the deck of his ship. But Alida and her companion arose like those who had more confidence in their visitor, and, arousing the negress from her sleep, they descended the ladder and entered the cabin. When

Ludlow found himself alone with Tiller he demanded an explanation.

"It shall not be withheld, for time presses, and that which is to be done must be done with a seaman's care and coolness," returned the other. "You have had a close brush on one of Louis' rovers, Captain Ludlow, and prettily was the ship of Queen Anne handled! Have your people suffered, and are you still strong enough to make good a defense worthy of your conduct this morning?"

"These are facts you would have me utter to the ear of one who may be false—even a spy!"

"Captain Ludlow—but circumstances warrant thy suspicions?"

"One whose vessel and life I have threatened—an outlaw!"

"This is too true," returned the Skimmer of the Seas, suppressing the sudden impulse of pride and resentment. I am threatened and pursued—I am a smuggler and an outlaw; still am I human! You see that dusky object which borders the sea to the northward?"

"It is too plainly land to be mistaken."

"Land, and the land of my birth! the earliest, perhaps I may say the happiest, of my days were passed on that long and narrow island."

"Had I known it earlier, there would have been a closer look among its bays and inlets."

"The search might have been rewarded. A cannon would easily throw its shot from this deck to the spot where my brigantine now lies, snug at a single anchor."

"Unless you have swept her near since the setting of the sun, that is impossible! When the night drew on, nothing was in view but the frigate and corvette of the enemy."

"We have not stirred a fathom; yet true as the word of a fearless man, there lies the vessel of the sea-green lady. You see the place where the beach falls—here, at the nearest point of the land—the island is nearly severed by the water at that spot, and the *Water-Witch* is safe in the depths of the bay which enters from the northward. There is not a mile between us. From the eastern hill I witnessed your spirit this day, Captain Ludlow, and though condemned in person, I felt that the heart could never be outlawed. There is a fealty here that can survive even the persecutions of the custom-houses."

"You are happy in your terms, sir. I will not conceal that I think a seaman, even as skillful as yourself, must allow that the *Coquette* was kept prettily in command."

"No pilot-boat could have been more sure or more lively. I knew your weakness, for the absence of all your boats was no secret to me; and I confess I could have spared some of the profits of the voyage to have been on your decks this day with a dozen of my truest fellows!"

"A man who can feel this loyalty to the flag should find a more honorable occupation for his usual life."

"A country that can inspire it should be cautious not to estrange the affections of its children by monopolies and injustice. But these are discussions unsuited to the moment. I am doubly your countryman in this strait, and all the past is no more than the rough liberties which friends take with each other. Captain Ludlow, there is danger brooding in that dark void which lies to seaward!"

"On what authority do you speak thus?"

"Sight. I have been among your enemies and seen their deadly preparations. I know the caution is given to a brave man, and nothing shall be extenuated. You have need of all your resolution and of every arm—for they will be upon you in overwhelming numbers!"

"True or false, thy warning shall not be neglected."

"Hold!" said the Skimmer, arresting a forward movement of his companion with his hand. "Let them sleep to the last moment. You have yet an hour, and rest will renew their strength. You may trust the experience of a seaman who has passed half of the life of man on the ocean, and who has witnessed all its most stirring scenes, from the conflict of the elements to every variety of strife that man has invented to destroy his fellows. For another hour you will be

secure. After that hour God protect the unprepared! and God be merciful to him whose minutes are numbered!"

"Thy language and manner are those of one who deals honestly," returned Ludlow, struck by the apparent sincerity of the freetrader's communication. "In every event we shall be ready, though the manner of your having gained this knowledge is as great a mystery as your having appeared on the deck of my ship."

"Both can be explained," returned the Skimmer, motioning to his companion to follow to the taffrail. Here he pointed to a small and nearly imperceptible skiff, which floated at the bottom of a stern-ladder, and continued—"One who so often pays secret visits to the land can never be in want of the means. This nut-shell was easily transported across the narrow strip of land that separates the bay from the ocean; and though the surf moans so hoarsely, it is easily passed by a steady and dexterous oarsman. I have been under the martingale of the Frenchman, and you see that I am here. If your lookouts are less alert than usual, you will remember that a low gunwale, a dusky side, and a muffled oar are not readily detected when the eye is heavy and the body wearied. I must now quit you—unless you think it more prudent to send those who can be of no service out of the ship before the trial shall come?"

Ludlow hesitated. A strong desire to put Alida in a place of safety was met by his distrust of the smuggler's faith. He reflected a moment ere he answered:

"Your cockle-shell is not sufficiently secure for more than its owner. Go, and as you prove loyal, may you prosper!"

"Abide the blow!" said the Skimmer, grasping his hand. He then stepped carelessly on the dangling ropes, and descended into the boat beneath. Ludlow watched his movements with an intense and possibly with a distrustful curiosity.

When seated at the sculls, the person of the freetrader was nearly indistinct; and as the boat glided noiselessly away, the young commander no longer felt disposed to censure those who had permitted its approach without a warning. In less than a minute the dusky object was confounded with the surface of the sea.

Left to himself, the young commander of the *Coquette* seriously reflected on what had passed. The manner of the Skimmer, the voluntary character of his communication, its probability, and the means by which his knowledge had been obtained, united to confirm his truth. Instances of similar attachment to their flag, in seamen whose ordinary pursuits were opposed to its interests, were not uncommon. Their misdeeds resemble the errors of passion and temptation, while the momentary return to better things is the inextinguishable impulse of nature.

The admonition of the freetrader, who had enjoined the Captain to allow his people to sleep, was remembered. Twenty times, within as many minutes, did our young sailor examine his watch to note the tardy passage of the time; as often did he return it to his pocket with a determination to forbear. At length he descended to the quarter-deck, and drew near the only form that was erect. The watch was commanded by a youth of sixteen, whose regular period of probationary service had not passed, but who, in the absence of his superiors, was intrusted with this delicate and important duty. He stood leaning against the capstan, one hand supporting his cheek, while the elbow rested against the drum, and the body was without motion. Ludlow regarded him a moment; then, lifting a lighted battle-lantern to his face, he saw that he slept. Without disturbing the delinquent, the Captain replaced the lantern and passed forward. In the gangway there stood a marine, with his musket shouldered, in an attitude of attention. As Ludlow brushed within a few inches of his eyes, it was easy to be seen that they opened and shut involuntarily, and without consciousness of what lay before them. On the top-gallant forecastle was a short, square and well-balanced figure, that stood without support of any kind, with both arms thrust into the bosom of a jacket, and a head that turned slowly to the west and south, as if it were examining the ocean in those directions.

Stepping lightly up the ladder, Ludlow saw that it was the veteran seaman who was rated as the captain of the forecastle.

"I am glad, at last, to find one pair of eyes open in my ship," said the Captain. "Of the whole watch, you alone are alert."

"I have doubled cape fifty, your honor, and the seaman who has made that voyage rarely wants the second call of the boatswain. Young heads have young eyes, and sleep is next to food, after a heavy drag at gun-tackles and lanyards."

"What draws your attention so steadily in that quarter? There is nothing visible but the haze of the sea."

"'Tis the direction of the Frenchman, sir—does your honor hear nothing?"

"Nothing," said Ludlow, after intently listening for half a minute. "Nothing, unless it be the wash of the surf on the beach."

"It may be only fancy, but there came a sound like the fall of an oar-blade on a thwart, and 'tis but natural, your honor, to expect the Mounsheer will be out, in this smooth water, to see what has become of us. There went the flash of a light, or my name is not Bob Cleet!"

Ludlow was silent. A light was certainly visible in the quarter where the enemy was known to be anchored, and it came and disappeared like a moving lantern. At length it was seen to descend slowly, and vanish as if it were extinguished in the water.

"That lantern went into a boat, Captain Ludlow, though a lubber carried it!" said the positive old forecastle-man, shaking his head, and beginning to pace across the deck with the air of a man who needed no further confirmation of his suspicions.

Ludlow returned toward the quarter-deck, thoughtful but calm. He passed among his sleeping crew without awaking a man, even forbearing to touch the still motionless midshipman, and he entered his cabin without speaking.

The commander of the *Coquette* was absent but a few minutes. When he again appeared on deck, there was more of decision and preparation in his manner.

"'Tis time to call the watch, Mr. Reef," he whispered at the elbow of the drowsy officer of the deck, without betraying his consciousness of the youth's forgetfulness of duty. "The glass is out."

"Aye, aye, sir. Bear a hand, and turn the glass!" muttered the young man. "A fine night, sir, and a very smooth water. I was just thinking of——"

"Home and thy mother! 'Tis the way with us all in youth. Well, we have now something else to occupy the thoughts. Muster all the gentlemen here, on the quarter-deck, sir."

When the half-sleeping midshipman quitted his Captain to obey this order, the latter drew near the spot where Trysail still lay in an unquiet sleep. A light touch of a single finger was sufficient to raise the master on his feet. The first look of the veteran tar was aloft, the second at the heavens, the last at his Captain.

"I fear thy wound stiffens, and that the night air has added to the pain?" observed the latter, speaking in a kind and considerate tone.

"The wounded spar cannot be trusted like a sound stick, Captain Ludlow; but as I am no foot-soldier on a march, the duty of the ship may go on without my calling for a horse."

"I rejoice in thy cheerful spirit, my old friend, for here is serious work likely to fall upon our hands. The Frenchmen are in their boats, and we shall shortly be brought to close quarters, or prognostics are false."

"Boats!" repeated the master. "I had rather it were under our canvas with a stiff breeze! The play of this ship is a lively foot and a touching leach; but, when it comes to boats, a marine is nearly as good a man as a quartermaster!"

"We must take fortune as it offers. Here is our council! It is composed of young heads, but of hearts that might do credit to gray hairs."

Ludlow joined the little group of officers that was by this time assembled near the capstan. Here, in a few words, he explained the reason why he had summoned

them from their sleep. When each of the youths understood his orders, and the nature of the new danger that threatened the ship, they separated, and began to enter with activity, but in guarded silence, on the necessary preparations. The sound of footsteps awoke a dozen of the older seamen, who immediately joined their officers.

Half an hour passed like a moment in such an occupation. At the end of that time Ludlow deemed his ship ready. The two forward guns had been run in, and the shot having been drawn, their places were supplied with double charges of grape and canister. Several swivels, a species of armament much used in that age, were loaded to the muzzle, and placed in situations to rake the deck, while the foretop was plentifully stored with arms and ammunition. The matches were prepared, and the whole of the crew was mustered by a particular call of each man. Five minutes sufficed to issue the necessary orders, and to see each post occupied. After this the low hum ceased in the ship, and the silence again became so deep and general that the wash of the receding surf was nearly as audible as the plunge of the wave on the sands.

Ludlow stood on the forecastle, accompanied by his master. Here he lent all his senses to the appearance of the elements, and to the signs of the moment. Wind there was none, though occasionally a breath of hot air came from the land, like the first efforts of the night breeze. The heavens were clouded, though a few thoughtful stars glimmered between the masses of vapor.

"A calmer night never shut in the Americas!" said the veteran Trysail, shaking his head doubtingly, and speaking in a cautious tone. "I am one of those, Captain Ludlow, who think more than half the virtue is out of a ship when her anchor is down!"

"With a weakened crew it may be better for us that the people have no yards to handle, nor any bowlines to steady. All our care can be given to defense."

"This is much like telling the hawk he can fight the better with clipped wing, since he has not the trouble of flying! The nature of a ship is motion, and the merit of a seaman is judicious and lively handling; but of what use is complaining, since it will neither lift an anchor nor fill a sail? What is your opinion, Captain Ludlow, concerning an after-life, and all of those matters one occasionally hears of if he happens to drift in the way of a church?"

"The question is broad as the ocean, my good friend, and a fitting answer might lead us into abstrusities deeper than any in our trigonometry. Was that the stroke of an oar?"

"'Twas a land noise. Well, I am no great navigator among the channels of religion. Every new argument is a sandbar, or a shoal, that obliges me to tack and stand off again, else I might have been a bishop, for anything the world knows to the contrary. 'Tis a gloomy night, Captain Ludlow, and one that is sparing of its stars. I never knew luck come of an expedition on which a natural light did not fall!"

"So much the worse for those who seek to harm us. I surely heard an oar in the rowlock!"

"It came from the shore and had the sound of the land about it," quietly returned the master, who still kept his eye riveted on the heavens. "This world in which we live, Captain Ludlow, is one of extraordinary uses; but that to which we are steering is still more unaccountable. They say that worlds are sailing above us like ships in a clear sea; and there are people who believe that, when we take our departure from this planet, we are only bound to another, in which we are to be rated according to our own deeds here, which is much the same as being drafted for a new ship with a certificate of service in one's pocket."

"The resemblance is perfect," returned the other, leaning far over the timber-head to catch the smallest sound that might come from the ocean. "That was no more than the blowing of a porpoise!"

"It was strong enough for the puff of a whale. There is no scarcity of big fish

on the coast of this island, and bold harpooners are the men who are scattered about on the sandy downs, here-away, to the northward. I once sailed with an officer who knew the name of every star in the heavens, and often have I passed hours in listening to his history of their magnitude and character, during the middle watches. It was his opinion that there is but one navigator for all the rovers of the air, whether meteors, comets, or planets."

"No doubt he must be right, having been there."

"No, that is more than I can say for him, though few men have gone deeper into the high latitudes on both sides of our own equator than he. One surely spoke —here, in a line with yonder low star!"

"Was it not a water-fowl?"

"No gull—ha! here we have the object just within the starboard jib-boom-guy. There comes the Frenchman in his pride, and 'twill be lucky for him who lives to count the slain, or to boast of his deeds!"

The master descended from the forecastle, and passed among the crew, with every thought recalled from its excursive flight to the duty of the moment. Ludlow continued on the forecastle alone. There was a low, whispering sound in the ship, like that which is made by the murmuring of a rising breeze—then all was still as death.

The *Coquette* lay with her head to seaward, the stern necessarily pointing toward the land. The distance from the latter was less than a mile, and the direction of the ship's hull was caused by the course of the heavy ground-swell, which incessantly rolled the water on the wide beach of the island. The head-gear lay in the way of the dim view; and Ludlow walked out on the bowsprit, in order that nothing should lie between him and the part of the ocean he wished to study. Here he had not stood a minute when he caught, first a confused and then a more distinct glimpse of a line of dark objects, advancing slowly toward the ship. Assured of the position of his enemy, he returned in-board and descended among his people. In another moment he was again on the forecastle, across which he paced leisurely, and, to all appearance, with the calmness of one who enjoyed the refreshing coolness of the night.

At the distance of a hundred fathoms, the dusky line of boats paused and began to change its order. At that instant the first puffs of the land-breeze were felt, and the stern of the ship made a gentle inclination seaward.

"Help her with the mizzen! Let fall the topsail!" whispered the young Captain to those beneath him. Ere another moment the flap of the loosened sail was heard. The ship swung still farther, and Ludlow stamped on the deck.

A round fiery light shot beyond the martingale, and the smoke rolled along the sea, outstripped by a crowd of missiles that were hissing across the water. A shout, in which command was mingled with shrieks, followed, and oar-blades were heard dashing the water aside regardless of concealment. The ocean lighted, and three or four boat-guns returned the fatal discharge from the ship. Ludlow had not spoken. Still alone on his elevated and exposed post, he watched the effects of both fires with a commander's coolness. The smile that struggled about his compressed mouth, when the momentary confusion among the boats betrayed the success of his own attack, had been wild and exulting; but when he heard the rending of the plank beneath him, the heavy groans that succeeded, and the rattling of lighter objects that were scattered by the shot as it passed with lessened force along the deck of his ship, it became fierce and resentful.

"Let them have it!" he shouted, in a clear, animating voice, that assured the people of his presence and his care. "Show them the humor of an Englishman's sleep, my lads! Speak to them, tops and decks!"

The order was obeyed. The remaining bow-gun was fired, and the discharge of all the *Coquette's* musketry and blunderbusses followed. A crowd of boats came sweeping under the bowsprit of the ship at the same moment, when there arose the clamor and shouts of the boarders.

The succeeding minutes were full of con-

fusion, and of devoted exertion. Twice were the head and bowsprit of the ship filled with dark groups of men, whose grim visages were only visible by the pistol's flash; as often were they cleared by the pike and bayonet. A third effort was more successful, and the tread of the assailants was heard on the deck of the forecastle. The struggle was but momentary, though many fell, and the narrow arena was soon slippery with blood. The Boulognese mariner was foremost among his countrymen, and at that desperate emergency Ludlow and Trysail fought in the common herd. Numbers prevailed; and it was fortunate for the commander of the *Coquette,* that the sudden recoil of a human body that fell upon him, drove him from his footing to the deck beneath.

Recovering from the fall, the young Captain cheered his men by his voice, and was answered by the deep-mouthed shouts which an excited seaman is ever ready to deliver, even to the death.

"Rally in the gangways, and defy them!" was the animated cry. "Rally in the gangways, hearts of oak," was returned by Trysail, in a ready but weakened voice. The men obeyed, and Ludlow saw that he could still muster a force capable of resistance.

Both parties for a moment paused. The fire of the top annoyed the boarders, and the defendants hesitated to advance. But the rush from both was common, and a fierce encounter occurred at the foot of the foremast. The crowd thickened in the rear of the French, and one of their number no sooner fell than another filled his place. The English receded, and Ludlow, extricating himself from the mass, retired to the quarter-deck.

"Give way, men!" he again shouted, so clear and steady, as to be heard above the cries and execrations of the fight. "Into the wings; down—between the guns—down—to your covers!"

The English disappeared, as if by magic. Some leaped upon the ridge-ropes, others sought the protection of the guns, and many went through the hatches. At that moment Ludlow made his desperate effort. Aided by the gunner, he applied matches to the two swivels, which had been placed in readiness for a last resort. The deck was enveloped in smoke, and, when the vapor lifted, the forward part of the ship was as clear as if man had never trodden it. All who had not fallen, had vanished.

A shout, and a loud hurrah, brought back the defendants, and Ludlow headed a charge upon the topgallant-forecastle, again, in person. A few of the assailants showed themselves from behind covers on the deck, and the struggle was renewed. Glaring balls of fire sailed over the heads of the combatants, and fell among the throng in the rear. Ludlow saw the danger, and he endeavored to urge his people on to regain the bow-guns, one of which was known to be loaded. But the explosion of a grenade on deck, and in his rear, was followed by a shock in the hold, that threatened to force the bottom out of the vessel. The alarmed and weakened crew began to waver; and as a fresh attack of grenades was followed by a fierce rally, in which the assailants brought up fifty men in a body from their boats, Ludlow found himself compelled to retire amid the retreating mass of his own crew.

The defense now assumed the character of hopeless but desperate resistance. The cries of the enemy were more and more clamorous; and they succeeded in nearly silencing the top, by a heavy fire of musketry established on the bowsprit and spritsail-yard.

Events passed much faster than they can be related. The enemy were in possession of all the forward part of the ship to her fore-hatches, but into these young Hopper had thrown himself, with half a dozen men, and, aided by a brother midshipman in the launch, backed by a few followers, they still held the assailants at bay. Ludlow cast an eye behind him, and began to think of selling his life as dearly as possible in the cabins. That glance was arrested by the sight of the malign smile of the sea-green lady, as the gleaming face rose above the taffrail. A dozen dark forms leaped upon the poop, and then arose a voice that sent every tone it uttered to his heart.

"Abide the shock!" was the shout of those who came to the succor; and "Abide the shock!" was echoed by the crew. The mysterious image glided along the deck, and Ludlow knew the athletic frame that brushed through the throng at its side.

There was little noise at the onset, save the groans of the sufferers. It endured but a moment, but it was a moment that resembled the passage of a whirlwind. The defendants knew that they were succored, and the assailants recoiled before so unexpected a foe. The few that were caught beneath the forecastle were mercilessly slain, and those above were swept from their post like chaff drifting in a gale. The living and the dead were heard falling alike into the sea, and in an inconceivably short space of time the decks of the *Coquette* were free. A solitary enemy still hesitated on the bowsprit. A powerful and active frame leaped along the spar, and though the blow was not seen, its effects were visible, as the victim tumbled helplessly into the ocean.

The hurried dash of oars followed, and before the defendants had time to assure themselves of the completeness of their success, the gloomy void of the surrounding ocean had swallowed up the boats.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"That face of his I do remember well;
Yet, when I saw it last, it was besmeared
As black as Vulcan, in the smoke of war."
—TWELFTH NIGHT

FROM the moment when the *Coquette* fired her first gun, to the moment when the retiring boats became invisible, was just twenty minutes. Of this time, less than half had been occupied by the incidents related in the ship. Short as it was in truth, it seemed to all engaged but an instant. The alarm was over, the sound of the oars had ceased, and still the survivors stood at their posts, as if expecting the attack to be renewed. Then came those personal thoughts, which had been suspended in the fearful exigency of such a struggle. The wounded began to feel their pain, and to be sensible of the danger of their injuries; while the few, who had escaped unhurt, turned a friendly care on their shipmates. Ludlow, as often happens with the bravest and most exposed, had escaped without a scratch; but he saw by the drooping forms around him, which were no longer sustained by the excitement of battle, that his triumph was dearly purchased.

"Send Mr. Trysail to me," he said, in a tone that had little of a victor's exultation. "The land-breeze has made, and we will endeavor to improve it, and get inside the cape, lest the morning light give us more of these Frenchmen."

The order for "Mr. Trysail!" "The Captain calls the master!" passed in a low call from mouth to mouth, but it was unanswered. A seaman told the expecting young commander that the surgeon desired his presence forward. A gleaming of lights and a little group at the foot of the foremast was a beacon not to be mistaken. The weather-beaten master was in agony; and his medical attendant had just risen from a fruitless examination of his wounds, as Ludlow approached.

"I hope the hurt is not serious?" hurriedly whispered the alarmed young sailor to the surgeon, who was coolly collecting his implements in order to administer to some more promising subject. "Neglect nothing that your art can suggest."

"The case is desperate, Captain Ludlow," returned the phlegmatic surgeon; "but if you have a taste for such things, there is as beautiful a case for amputation promised in the fore-topman whom I have had sent below, as offers once in a whole life of active practice!"

"Go, go," interrupted Ludlow, half pushing the unmoved man of blood away, as he spoke; "go, then, where your services are needed."

The other cast a glance around him, reproved his attendant, in a sharp tone, for unnecessarily exposing the blade of some ferocious-looking instrument to the dew, and departed.

"Would to God that some portion of these injuries had befallen those who are younger and stronger!" murmured the

Captain, as he leaned over the dying master. "Can I do aught to relieve thy mind, my old and worthy shipmate?"

"I have had my misgivings since we have dealt with witchcraft!" returned Trysail, whose voice the rattling of the throat had already nearly silenced; "I have had misgivings—but no matter. Take care of the ship—I have been thinking of our people—you'll have to cut—they can never lift the anchor—the wind is here at north."

"All this is ordered. Trouble thyself no further about the vessel; she shall be taken care of, I promise you. Speak of thy wife and of thy wishes in England."

"God bless Mrs. Trysail! She'll get a pension, and I hope contentment! You must give the reef a good berth, in rounding Montauk—and you'll naturally wish to find the anchors again when the coast is clear—if you can find it in your conscience, say a good word of poor old Ben Trysail, in the dispatches——"

The voice of the master sank to a whisper, and became inaudible. Ludlow thought he strove to speak again, and he bent his ear to his mouth.

"I say—the weather-main-swifter and both backstays are gone; look to the spars for—for—there are sometimes—heavy puffs at night—in the Americas."

The last heavy respiration succeeded, after which came the long silence of death. The body was removed to the poop, and Ludlow, with a saddened heart, turned to duties that this accident rendered still more imperative.

Notwithstanding the heavy loss, and the originally weakened state of her crew, the sails of the *Coquette* were soon spread, and the ship sailed away in silence, as if sorrowing for those who had fallen at her anchorage. When the vessel was fairly in motion, her Captain ascended to the poop in order to command a clearer view of all around him, as well as to profit by the situation to arrange his plans for the future. He found he had been anticipated by the freetrader.

"I owe my ship—I may say my life since in such a conflict they would have gone together, to thy succor!" said the young commander, as he approached the motionless form of the smuggler. "Without it, Queen Anne would have lost a cruiser, and the flag of England a portion of its well-earned glory."

"May thy royal mistress prove as ready to remember her friends in emergencies as mine. In good truth there was little time to lose, and trust me, we well understood the extremity. If we were tardy, it was because whale boats were to be brought from a distance; for the land lies between my brigantine and the sea."

"He who came so opportunely, and acted so well, needs no apology."

"Captain Ludlow, are we friends?"

"It cannot be otherwise. All minor considerations must be lost in such a service. If it is your intention to push this illegal trade farther on the coast, I must seek another station."

"Not so. Remain, and do credit to your flag, and the land of your birth. I have long thought this is the last time the keel of the *Water-Witch* will ever plow the American seas. Before I quit you, I would have an interview with the merchant. A worse man might have fallen, and just now a better might be spared. I hope no harm has come to him?"

"He has shown the steadiness of his Holland lineage to-day. During the boarding he was useful and cool."

"It is well. Let the Alderman be summoned to the deck, for my time is limited, and I have much to say——"

The Skimmer paused, for at that moment a fierce light glared upon the ocean, the ship, and all in it. The two seamen gazed at each other in silence, and recoiled, as men recede before an unexpected and fearful attack. But a bright and wavering light, which rose out of the forward hatch of the vessel, explained all. At the same moment, the deep stillness which, since the bustle of making sail had ceased, pervaded the ship, was broken by the appalling cry of "Fire!"

The alarm which brings the blood in the swiftest current to a seaman's heart was now heard in the depths of the vessel. The smothered sounds below, the advancing uproar, and the rush on deck, with the

awful summons in the open air, succeeded each other with the rapidity of lightning. A dozen voices repeated the word, "The grenade!" proclaiming in a breath both the danger and the cause. But an instant before, the swelling canvas, the dusky spars, and the faint lines of the cordage, were only to be traced by the glimmering light of the stars; now the whole hamper of the ship was the more conspicuous from the obscure background against which it was drawn in distinct lines. The sight was fearfuly beautiful; beautiful, for it showed the symmetry and fine outlines of the vessel's rig, resembling the effect of a group of statuary seen by torchlight—fearful, since the dark void beyond seemed to declare their isolated and helpless state.

There was one breathless, eloquent moment, in which all were seen gazing at the grand spectacle in mute awe—then a voice rose, clear, distinct, and commanding, above the sullen sound of the torrent of fire, which was roaring among the avenues of the ship.

"Call all hands to extinguish the fire! Gentlemen, to your stations. Be cool, men; and be silent!"

There was a calmness and an authority in the tones of the young commander that curbed the impetuous feelings of the startled crew. Accustomed to obedience, and trained to order, each man woke out of his trance and eagerly commenced the discharge of his allotted duty. At that instant an erect and unmoved form stood on the coamings of the main-hatch. A hand was raised in the air, and the call which came from the deep chest was like that of one used to speak in the tempest.

"Where are my brigantines?" it said; "come away there, my sea-dogs; wet the light sails and follow!"

A group of grave and submissive mariners gathered about the Skimmer of the Seas, at the sound of his voice. Glancing an eye over them, as if to scan their quality and number, he smiled with a look in which high daring and practiced self-command were blended with a constitutional gaite de cœur.

"One deck or two!" he added; "what avails a plank more or less, in an explosion? Follow!"

The freetrader and his people disappeared in the interior of the ship, An interval of great and resolute exertion succeeded. Blankets, sails, and everything which offered, and which promised to be of use, were wetted and cast upon the flames. The engine was brought to bear and the ship was deluged with water. But the confined space, with the heat and smoke, rendered it impossible to penetrate to those parts of the vessel where the conflagration raged. The ardor of the men abated as hope lessened; and after half an hour of fruitless exertion, Ludlow saw with pain that his assistants began to yield to the inextinguishable principle of nature. The appearance of the Skimmer on deck, followed by all his people, destroyed hope, and every effort ceased as suddenly as it had commenced.

"Think of your wounded," whispered the freetrader, with a steadiness no danger could disturb. "We stand on a raging volcano!"

"I have ordered the gunner to drown the magazine."

"He was too late. The hold of the ship is a fiery furnace. I heard him fall among the storerooms, and it surpassed the power of man to give the wretch succor. The grenade had fallen near some combustibles, and, painful as it is to part with a ship so loved, Ludlow, thou wilt meet the loss like a man! Think of thy wounded; my boats are still hanging at the stern."

Ludlow reluctantly, but firmly, gave the order to bear the wounded to the boats. This was an arduous and delicate duty. The smallest boy in the ship knew the whole extent of the danger, and that a moment, by the explosion of the powder, might precipitate them all into eternity. The deck forward was getting too hot to be endured, and there were places even in which the beams had given symptoms of yielding.

But the poop, elevated still above the fire, offered a momentary refuge. Thither all retired, while the weak and wounded

were lowered, with the caution circumstances would permit, into the whale boats of the smugglers.

Ludlow stood at one ladder and the freetrader at the other, in order to be certain that none proved recreant in so trying a moment. Near them were Alida, Seadrift and the Alderman, with the attendants of the former.

It seemed an age before this humane and tender duty was performed. At length the cry of "All in!" was uttered, in a manner to betray the extent of the self-command that had been necessary to effect it.

"Now, Alida, we may think of thee!" said Ludlow, turning to the spot occupied by the silent heiress.

"And you!" she said, hesitating to move.

"Duty demands that I shall be the last——"

A sharp explosion beneath, and fragments of fire flying upward through a hatch, interrupted his words. Plunges into the sea, and a rush of people to the boats, followed. All order and authority were completely lost in the instinct of life. In vain did Ludlow call on his men to be cool, and wait for those who were still above. His words were lost in the uproar of clamorous voices.

For a moment, it seemed, however, as if the Skimmer of the Seas would overcome the confusion. Throwing himself on a ladder, he glided into the bow of one of the boats, and, holding by the ropes with a vigorous arm, he resisted the efforts of all the oars and boathooks, while he denounced destruction on him who dared to quit the ship. Had not the two crews been mingled, the high authority and determined mien of the freetrader would have prevailed; but while some were disposed to obey, others raised the cry of "Throw the dealer in witchcraft into the sea!" Boat-hooks were already pointed at his breast, and the horrors of the fearful moment were about to be increased by the violence of a mutinous contention, when a second explosion nerved the arms of the rowers to madness. With a common and desperate effort, they overcame all resistance. Swinging off u the ladder, the furious seaman saw boat gliding from his grasp, and depa The execration that was uttered, bene the stern of the *Coquette*, was deep a powerful; but, in another moment, t Skimmer stood on the poop, calm a undejected, in the center of the desert group.

"The explosion of a few of the office pistols has frightened the miscreants," said cheerfully. "But hope is not y lost! They linger in the distance, an may return!"

The sight of the helpless party on th poop, and the consciousness of being les exposed themselves, had indeed arreste the progress of the fugitives. Still, sel ishness predominated; and while most re gretted their danger, none but the young and unheeded midshipmen, who wer neither of an age nor of a rank to wield sufficient authority, proposed to return. There was little argument necessary to show that the perils increased at each moment; and finding that no other expedient remained, the gallant youths encouraged the men to pull toward the land, intending themselves to return instantly to the assistance of their commander and his friends. The oars dashed into the water again, and the retiring boats were soon lost to view in the body of darkness.

While the fire had been raging within, another element without had aided to lessen the hope for those who were abandoned. The wind from the land had continued to rise, and, during the time lost in useless exertion, the ship had been permitted to run nearly before it. When hope was gone, the helm had been deserted, and as all the lower sails had been hauled up to avoid the flames, the vessel had drifted many minutes nearly dead to leeward. The mistaken youths, who had not attended to these circumstances, were already miles from that beach they hoped to reach so soon; and ere the boats had separated from the ship five minutes they were hopelessly asunder. Ludlow had early thought of the expedient of stranding the vessel as a means of saving her people; but his better knowledge of their

position soon showed him the utter futility of the attempt.

Of the progress of the flames beneath, the mariners could only judge by circumstances. The Skimmer glanced his eye about him, on regaining the poop, and appeared to scan the amount and quality of the physical force that was still at their disposal. He saw that the Alderman, the faithful Francois, and two of his own seamen, with four of the petty officers of the ship, remained. The six latter, even in that moment of desperation, had calmly refused to desert their officers.

"The flames are in the staterooms!" he whispered to Ludlow.

"Not farther aft, I think, than the berths of the midshipmen—else we should hear more pistols."

"True—they are fearful signals to let us know the progress of the fire!—our best resource is a raft."

Ludlow looked as if he despaired of the means, but, concealing the discouraging fear, he answered cheerfully in the affirmative. The orders were instantly given, and all on board gave themselves to the task, heart and hand. The danger was one that admitted of no ordinary or half conceived expedients; but, in such an emergency, it required all the readiness of their art, and even the greatness of that conception which is the property of genius.

All distinctions of rank and authority had ceased, except as deference was paid to natural qualities and the intelligence of experience. Under such circumstances, the Skimmer of the Seas took the lead; and though Ludlow caught his ideas with professional quickness, it was the mind of the freetrader that controlled throughout the succeeding exertions of that fearful night.

The cheek of Alida was blanched to a deadly paleness; but there rested about the bright and wild eyes of Seadrift an expression of supernatural resolution.

When the crew abandoned the hope of extinguishing the flames, they closed all the hatches to retard the crisis as much as possible. Here and there, however, little torch-like lights were beginning to show themselves through the planks, and the whole deck, forward of the mainmast, was already in a critical and sinking state. One or two of the beams had failed; but, as yet, the form of the construction was preserved. Still the seamen distrusted the treacherous footing; and, had the heat permitted the experiment, they would have shrunk back from a risk which at any unexpected moment might commit them to the fiery furnace beneath.

The smoke ceased, and a clear, powerful light illuminated the ship to her trucks. In consequence of the care and exertions of her people, the sails and masts were yet untouched; and as the graceful canvas swelled with the breeze, it still urged the blazing hull through the water.

The forms of the Skimmer and his assistants were visible, in the midst of the gallant gear, perched on the giddy yards. Seen by that light, with his peculiar attire, his firm and certain step, and his resolute air, the freetrader resembled some fancied sea-god, who, secure in immortal immunities, had come te act his part in that awful but exciting trial of hardihood and skill. Seconded by the common men, he was employed in cutting the canvas from the yards. Sail after sail fell upon the deck, and, in an incredibly short space of time, the whole of the foremast was naked to its spars and rigging.

In the meantime, Ludlow, assisted by the Alderman and Francois, had not been idle below. Passing forward between the empty ridge-ropes, lanyard after lanyard parted under the blows of their little boarding-axes. The mast now depended on the strength of the wood and the support of a single back-stay.

"Lay down!" shouted Ludlow. "All is gone aft, but this stay!"

The Skimmer leaped upon the firm rope, followed by all aloft, and, gliding downward, he was instantly in the hammock-cloths. A crash followed their descent, and an explosion, which caused the whole of the burning fabric to tremble to its center, seemed to announce the end of all. Even the freetrader recoiled before the horrid din; but when he stood near Seadrift and the heiress again, there was cheerfulness in his tones, and a look of

high and even of gay resolution in his firm countenance.

"The deck has failed forward!" he said, "and our artillery is beginning to utter fearful signal-guns! Be of cheer! The magazine of the ship lies deep, and many sheathed bulkheads still protect us."

Another discharge from a heated gun, however, proclaimed the rapid progress of the flames. The fire broke out of the interior anew, and the foremast kindled.

"There must be an end of this!" said Alida, clasping her hands in a terror that could not be controlled. "Save yourselves, if possible, you who have the strength and courage, and leave us to the mercy of Him whose eye is over all!"

"Go!" added Seadrift, whose sex could no longer be concealed. "Human courage can do no more; leave us to die!"

The looks that were returned to these sad requests were melancholy, but unmoved. The Skimmer caught a rope, and still holding it in his hand, he descended to the quarter-deck, on which he at first trusted his weight with jealous caution. Then looking up, he smiled encouragingly, and said, "Where a gun stands, there is no danger for the weight of a man!"

"It is our only resource," cried Ludlow, imitating his example. "On, my men, while the beams will still hold us."

In a moment all were on the quarter-deck, though the excessive heat rendered it impossible to remain stationary for an instant. A gun on each side was run in, its tackles loosened, and its muzzle pointed toward the tottering, unsupported, but still upright foremast.

"Aim at the cleats!" said Ludlow to the Skimmer, who pointed one gun, while he did the same office at the other.

"Hold!" cried the latter. "Throw in shot—it is but the chance between a bursting gun and a lighted magazine!"

Additional balls were introduced into each piece, and then with steady hands, the gallant mariners applied burning brands to the priming. The discharges were simultaneous, and, for an instant, volumes of smoke rolled along the deck and seemed to triumph over the conflagration. The rending of wood was audible. It was followed by a sweeping noise in the air, and the fall of the foremast, with all its burden of spars, into the sea. The motion of the ship was instantly arrested, and as the heavy timbers were still attached to the bowsprit by the forward stays, her head came to the wind, when the remaining topsails flapped, shivered, and took aback.

The vessel was now, for the first time during the fire, stationary. The common mariners profited by the circumstance; and, darting past the mounting flames along the bulwarks, they gained the top-gallant-forecastle, which, though heated, was yet untouched. The Skimmer glanced an eye about him, and seizing Seadrift by the waist, as if the mimic seaman had been a child, he pushed forward between the ridge-ropes. Ludlow followed with Alida, and the others imitated their example in the best manner they could. All reached the head of the ship in safety; though Ludlow had been driven by the flames into the fore-channels, and thence nearly into the sea.

The petty officers were already on the floating spars separating them from each other, cutting away the unnecessary weight of rigging, bringing the several parts of the wood in parallel lines, and lashing them anew. Ever and anon, these rapid movements were quickened by one of those fearful signals from the officers' berths, which, by announcing the progress of the flames beneath, betrayed their increasing proximity to the still slumbering volcano. The boats had been gone an hour, yet it seemed, to all in the ship, but a minute. The conflagration had, for the last ten minutes, advanced with renewed fury; and the whole of the confined flame, which had been so long pent in the depths of the vessel, now glared high in the open air.

"This heat can no longer be borne," said Ludlow, "we must to our raft for breath."

"To the raft then!" returned the cheerful voice of the freetrader. "Haul in upon your fasts, men, and stand by to receive the precious freight."

The seamen obeyed. Alida and her com-

panions were lowered safely to the place prepared for their reception. The foremast had gone over the side with all its spars aloft; for preparation had been made before the fire commenced to carry sail to the utmost in order to escape the enemy. The skillful and active seamen, directed and aided by Ludlow and the Skimmer, had made a simple but happy disposition of those buoyant materials on which their all now depended. In settling in the water, the yards, still crossed, had happily fallen uppermost. The booms and all the light spars had been floated near the top, and laid across, reaching from the lower to the topsail-yard. A few light spars, stowed outboard, had been cut away and added to the number, and the whole were secured with the readiness and ingenuity of seamen. On the first alarm of fire, some of the crew had seized a few light articles that would float, and rushed to the head, as the place most remote from the magazine, in the blind hope of saving life by swimming. Most of these articles had been deserted when the people were rallied to exertion by their officers. A couple of empty shot-boxes and a mess-chest were among them, and on the latter were seated the females, while the former served to keep their feet from the water. As the arrangement of the spars forced the principal mast beneath the element, and the ship was so small as to need little artificial work in her masting, the part around the top, which contained the staging, was scarcely submerged.

Although a ton in weight was added to the inherent gravity of the wood, still, as the latter was of the lightest description, and freed as much as possible of everything that was unnecessary to the safety of those it supported, the spars floated sufficiently buoyant for the temporary security of the fugitives.

"Cut the fasts!" said Ludlow, involuntarily starting at several explosions in the interior, which followed each other in quick succession, and which were succeeded by one which sent fragments of burning wood into the air. "Cut, and bear the raft off the ship! God knows we have need to be farther asunder!"

"Cut not!" cried the half frantic Seadrift. "My brave! my devoted——"

"Is safe," calmly said the Skimmer, appearing in the ratlines of the main-rigging, which was still untouched by the fire. "Cut off all! I stay to brace the mizzen-topsail more firmly aback."

The duty was done, and for a moment the fine figure of the freetrader was seen standing on the edge of the burning ship, looking with regret at the glowing mass.

"'Tis the end of a lovely craft!" he said, loud enough to be heard by those beneath. Then he appeared in the air and sank into the sea. "The last signal was from the ward-room," added the dauntless and dexterous mariner as he rose from the water, and, shaking the brine from his head, he took his place on the stage. "Would to God the wind would blow, for we have need of greater distance!"

The precaution the freetrader had taken in adjusting the sails, was not without its use. Motion the raft had none, but as the topsails of the *Coquette* were still aback, the flaming mass, no longer arrested by the clogs in the water, began slowly to separate from the floating spars, though the tottering and half-burned masts threatened at each moment to fall.

Never did moments seem so long as those which succeeded. Even the Skimmer and Ludlow watched, in speechless interest, the tardy movements of the ship. By little and little she receded; and, after ten minutes of intense expectation, the seamen, whose anxiety had increased as their exertions ended, began to breathe more freely. They were still fearfully near the dangerous fabric, but destruction from the explosion was no longer inevitable. The flames began to glide upward, and the heavens appeared on fire, as one heated sail after another kindled and flared wildly in the breeze.

Still the stern of the vessel was entire. The body of the master was seated against the mizzen-mast, and even the stern visage of the old seaman was distinctly visible, under the broad light of the conflagration. Ludlow gazed at it in melancholy,

and for a time he ceased to think of his ship, while memory dwelt, in sadness, on those scenes of boyish happiness, and of professional pleasures, in which his ancient shipmate had so largely participated. The roar of a gun, whose stream of fire flashed nearly to their faces, and the sullen whistling of its shot, which crossed the raft, failed to awaken him from his trance.

"Stand firm to the mess-chest!" half-whispered the Skimmer, motioning to his companions to place themselves in attitudes to support the weaker of their party, while with sedulous care, he braced his own athletic person in a manner to throw all of his weight and strength against the seat. "Stand firm, and be ready!"

Ludlow complied, though his eye scarce changed its direction. He saw the bright flame that was rising above the arm-chest, and he fancied it came from the funeral pile of the young Dumont, whose fate, at that moment, he was almost disposed to envy. Then his look returned to the grim countenance of Trysail. At moments it seemed as if the dead master spoke; and so strong did the illusion become, that our young sailor more than once bent forward to listen. While under this delusion, the body rose, with the arms stretched upward. The air was filled with a sheet of streaming fire, while the ocean and the heavens glowed with one glare of intense and fiery red. Notwithstanding the precaution of the Skimmer of the Seas, the chest was driven from its place, and those by whom it was held were nearly precipitated into the water.

A deep, heavy detonation proceeded as it were from the bosom of the sea, which, while it wounded the ear less than the sharp explosion that had just before issued from the gun, was audible at the distant capes of the Delaware. The body of Trysail sailed upward for fifty fathoms, in the center of a flood of flame, and, describing a short curve, it came toward the raft, and cut the water within reach of the Captain's arm. A sullen plunge of a gun followed, and proclaimed the tremendous power of the explosion; while a ponderous yard fell athwart a part of the raft, sweeping away the four petty officers of Ludlow, as if they had been dust driving before a gale. To increase the wild and fearful grandeur of the dissolution of the royal cruiser, one of the cannon emitted its fiery contents while sailing in the void.

The burning spars, the falling fragments, the blazing and scattered canvas and cordage, the glowing shot, and all the torn particles of the ship, were seen descending. Then followed the gurgling of the water, as the ocean swallowed all that remained of the cruiser which had so long been the pride of the American seas. The fiery glow disappeared, and a gloom, like that which succeeds the glare of vivid lightning, fell on the scene.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Please you, read."—CYMBELINE.

"IT is past!" said the Skimmer of the Seas, raising himself from the attitude of great muscular exertion, which he had assumed in order to support the mess-chest, and walking out along the single mast toward the spot whence the four seamen of Ludlow had just been swept. "It is past! and those who are called to the last account have met their fate in such a scene as none but a seaman may witness; while those who are spared have need of all a seaman's skill and resolution for that which remains. Captain Ludlow, I do not despair; for, see, the lady of the brigantine has still a smile for her servitors!"

Ludlow, who had followed the steady and daring freetrader to the place where the spar had fallen, turned and cast a look in the direction in which the other stretched his arm. Within a hundred feet of him he saw the image of the sea-green lady rocking on the agitated water, and turned toward the raft with its usual expression of wild and malicious intelligence. The emblem of their fancied mistress had been borne in front of the smugglers when they mounted the poop of the *Coquette;* and the steeled staff on which the lantern was perched had been stuck

in a horse-bucket by the standard-bearer of the moment, ere he entered the melee of the combat. During the conflagration this object had more than once met the eye of Ludlow, and now it had appeared floating by him in a manner almost to shake even his contempt for the ordinary superstitions of a seaman. While he hesitated in what manner he should reply to his companion's remark the latter plunged into the sea and swam toward the light.

He was soon by the side of the raft again, bearing aloft the symbol of his brigantine. There are none so firm in the dominion of reason as to be entirely superior to the secret impulses which teach us all to believe in the hidden agency of a good or an evil fortune. The voice of the freetrader was more cheerful, and his step more sure and elastic as he crossed the stage and struck the armed end of the staff into that part of the top-rim of the *Coquette* which floated uppermost.

"Courage!" he gaily replied. "While this light burns my star in not set! Courage, lady of the land; for here is one of the deep waters who still looks kindly on her followers! We are at sea, on a frail craft it is certain, but a dull sailer may make a sure passage. Speak, gallant Master Seadrift; thy gayety and spirit should revive under so goodly an omen!"

But the agent of so many pleasant masquerades, and the instrument of so much of his artifice, had not a fortitude equal to the buoyant temper of the smuggler. The counterfeit bowed his head by the side of the silent Alida without a reply. The Skimmer of the Seas regarded the group a moment with manly interest, and touching the arm of Ludlow he walked with a balancing step along the spars until they had reached a spot where they might confer without causing unnecessary alarm to their companions.

Although so imminent and pressing a danger as that of the explosion had passed, the situation of those who had escaped was scarcely better than that of those who had been lost. The heavens showed a few glimmering stars in the openings of the clouds, and now that the first contrast of the change had lessened, there was just enough of light to render all the features of their actual state gloomily imposing.

It has been said that the foremast of the *Coquette* went by the board, with most of its hamper aloft. The sails, with such portion of the rigging as might help to sustain it, had been hastily cut away as related; and after its fall, until the moment of the explosion, the common men had been engaged, either in securing the staging or in clearing the wreck of those heavy ropes which, useless as fastenings, only added to the weight of the mass. The whole wreck lay upon the sea, with the yards crossed and in their places, much as the spars had stood. The large booms had been unshipped, and laid in such a manner around the top, with the ends resting on the lower and topsail yards, as to form the foundation of the staging. The smaller booms, with the mess-chest and the shot-boxes, were all that lay between the group in the center, and the depths of the ocean. The upper part of the top-rim rose a few feet above the water, and formed an important protection against the night-breeze and the constant washing of the waves. In this manner were the females seated, cautioned not to trust their feet on the frail security of the booms, and supported by the unremitting care of the Alderman. Francois had submitted to be lashed to the top by one of the brigantine's seamen; while the latter, all of the common herd who remained, encouraged by the presence of their standard-light, began to occupy themselves in looking to the fastenings and other securities of the raft.

"We are in no condition for a long or an active cruise, Captain Ludlow," said the Skimmer, when he and his companion were out of hearing. "I have been at sea in all weathers, and in every description of craft; but this is the boldest of my experiments on the water. I hope it may not be the last!"

"We cannot conceal from ourselves the frightful hazards we run," returned Ludlow, "however much we may wish them to be a secret to some among us."

"This is truly a deserted sea to be abroad in, on a raft. Were we in the narrow passages between the British Islands and the Main, or even in the Biscay waters, there would be hope that some trader or roving cruiser might cross our track; but our chance here lies much between the Frenchman and the brigantine."

"The enemy has doubtless seen and heard the explosion, and, as the land is so near, they will infer that the people are saved in the boats. Our chance of seeing more of them is much diminished by the accident of the fire, since there will no longer be a motive for remaining on the coast."

"And will your young officers abandon their Captain without a search?"

"Hope of aid from that quarter is faint. The ship ran miles while in flames; and, before the light returns, these spars will have drifted leagues with the ebbing tide, to seaward."

"Truly, I have sailed with better auguries!" observed the Skimmer. "What are the bearings and distance of the land?"

"It still lies to the north, but we are fast setting east and southerly. Ere morning we shall be a-beam of Montauk, or even beyond it; we must already be some leagues in the offing."

"That is worse than I had imagined! but there is hope on the flood!"

"The flood will bear us northward again — but what think you of the heavens?"

"Unfavorable, though not desperate. The sea-breeze will return with the sun."

"And with it will return the swell! How long will these ill-secured spars hold together when agitated by the heave of the water? Or how long will those with us bear up against the wash of the sea, unsupported by nourishment?"

"You paint in gloomy colors, Captain Ludlow," said the freetrader, drawing a heavy breath, in spite of all his resolution. "My experience tells me you are right, though my wishes would fain contradict you. Still, I think we have the promise of a tranquil night."

"Tranquil for a ship, or even for a boat; but hazardous to a raft like this. You see that this topmast already works in the cap at each heave of the water, and as the wood loosens, our security lessens."

"Thy counsel is not flattering! Captain Ludlow, you are a seaman and a man, and I shall not attempt to trifle with your knowledge. With you, I think the danger imminent, and almost our only hope dependent on the good fortune of my brigantine."

"Will those in her think it their duty to quit their anchorage, to come in quest of a raft whose existence is unknown to them?"

"There is hope in the vigilance of her of the sea-green mantle! You may deem this fanciful, or even worse, at such a moment; but I, who have run so many gauntlets under her favor, have faith in her fortunes. Surely, you are not a seaman, Captain Ludlow, without a secret dependence on some unseen and potent agency!"

"My dependence is placed in the agency of Him who is all-potent, but never visible. If He forget us, we may indeed despair!"

"This is well, but it is not the fortune I would express. Believe me, spite of an education which teaches all you have said, and of a reason that is often too clear for folly, there is a secret reliance on hidden chances, that has been created by a life of activity and hazard, and which, if it should do nothing better, does not abandon me to despair. The omen of the light and the smile of my mistress would cheer me, spite of a thousand philosophers!"

"You are fortunate in purchasing consolation so cheaply," returned the commander of Queen Anne, who felt a latent hope in his companion's confidence that he would have hesitated to acknowledge. "I see but little that we can do to aid our chances, except it be to clear away all unnecessary weight, and to secure the raft as much as possible by additional lashings."

The Skimmer of the Seas assented to the proposal. Consulting a moment

longer on the details of their expedients, they rejoined the group near the top, in order to see them executed. As the seamen on the raft were reduced to the two people of the brigantine, Ludlow and his companion were obliged to assist in the performance of the duty.

Much useless rigging, that added to the pressure without aiding the buoyancy of the raft, was cut away—and all the boom irons were knocked off the yards, and suffered to descend to the bottom of the ocean.

By these means a great weight was taken from the raft, which in consequence floated with so much additional power to sustain those who depended on it for life. The Skimmer, accompanied by his two silent but obedient seamen, ventured along the attenuated and submerged spars to the extremity of the tapering masts, and after toiling with the dexterity of men accustomed to deal with the complicated machinery of a ship in the darkest nights, they succeeded in releasing the two smaller masts with their respective yards, and in floating them down to the body of the wreck, or the part around the top. Here the sticks were crossed in a manner to give great additional strength and footing to the stage.

There was an air of hope, and a feeling of increased security, in this employment. Even the Alderman and Francois aided in the task, to the extent of their knowledge and force. But when these alterations were made, and additional lashings had been applied to keep the topmast and the larger yards in their places, Ludlow, by joining those who were around the masthead, tacitly admitted that little more could be done to avert the chances of the elements.

During the few hours occupied in this important duty, Alida and her companion addressed themselves to God in long and fervent petitions. With woman's faith in that divine being who alone could avail them, and with woman's high mental fortitude in moments of protracted trial, they had both known how to control the exhibition of their terrors, and had sought their support in the same appeal to a power superior to all of earth. Ludlow was, therefore, more than rewarded by the sound of Alida's voice, speaking to him cheerfully, as she thanked him for what he had done, when he admitted that he could now do no more.

"The rest is with Providence!" added Alida. "All that bold and skillful seamen can do, have ye done; and all that woman in such a situation can do, have we done in your behalf."

"Thou hast thought of me in thy prayers, Alida. It is an intercession that the stoutest needs, and which none but the fool derides."

"And thou, Eudora! thou hast remembered Him who quiets the waters!" said a deep voice near the bending form of the counterfeit Seadrift.

"I have."

"'Tis well. There are points to which manhood and experience may pass, and there are those where all is left to One mightier than the elements!"

Words like these, coming from the lips of one of the known character of the Skimmer of the Seas, were not given to the winds. Even Ludlow cast an uneasy look at the heavens, when they came upon his ear, as if they conveyed a secret notice of the whole extremity of the danger by which they were environed. None answered; and a long silence succeeded, during which some of the more fatigued slumbered uneasily, spite of their fearful situation.

In this manner did the night pass in weariness and anxiety. Little was said, and for hours scarce a limb was moved, in the group that clustered around the mess-chest. As the signs of day appeared, however, every faculty was keenly awake to catch the first signs of what they had to hope, or the first certainty of what they had to fear.

The surface of the ocean was still smooth, though the long swells in which the element was heaving and setting, sufficiently indicated that the raft had floated far from the land. This fact was rendered sure when the light, which soon appeared along the eastern margin of the narrow view, was shed gradually over the whole horizon. Nothing was at first visible but

one gloomy and vacant waste of water. But a cry of joy from Seadrift, whose senses had long been practiced in ocean sights, soon drew all eyes in the direction opposite to that of the rising sun, and it was not long before all on the low raft had a view of the snowy surfaces of a ship's sails, as the glow of morning touched the canvas.

"It is the Frenchman!" said the free-trader. "He is charitably looking for the wreck of his late enemy!"

"It may be so, for our fate can be no secret to him," was the answer of Ludlow. "Unhappily, we had run some distance from the anchorage before the flames broke out. Truly, those with whom we so lately struggled for life, are bent on a duty of humanity."

"Ah, yonder is his crippled consort!—to leeward many a league. The gay bird has been too sadly stripped of its plumage to fly so near the wind! This is man's fortune! He uses his power, at one moment, to destroy the very means that become necessary to his safety the next."

"And what think you of our hopes?" asked Alida, searching in the countenance of Ludlow a clew to their fate. "Does the stranger move in a direction favorable to our wishes?"

Neither Ludlow nor the Skimmer replied. Both regarded the frigate intently; then, as objects became more distinct, both answered by a common impulse, that the ship was steering directly toward them. The declaration excited general hope, and even the negress was no longer restrained by her situation from expressing her joy in vociferous exclamations of delight.

A few minutes of active and ready exertion succeeded. A light boom was unlashed from the raft and raised on its end, supporting a little signal made of the handkerchiefs of the party, which fluttered in the light breeze at the elevation of some twenty feet above the surface of the water. After this precaution was observed, they were obliged to await the result in such patience as they could assume. Minute passed after minute, and, at each moment, the form and proportions of the ship became more distinct, until all the mariners of the party declared they could distinguish men on her yards. A cannon would have readily sent its shot from the ship to the raft, yet no sign betrayed the consciousness of those in the former of the proximity of the latter.

"I do not like this manner of steering!" observed the Skimmer to the silent and attentive Ludlow. "He yaws broadly, as if disposed to give up the search. God grant him the heart to continue on his course ten minutes longer!"

"Have we no means of making ourselves heard?" demanded the Alderman. "Methinks the voice of a strong man might be sent thus far across the water when life is at stake."

The more experienced shook their heads: but, not discouraged, the burgher raised his voice with a power that was sustained by the imminency of the peril. He was joined by the seamen, and even Ludlow lent his aid, until all were hoarse with the fruitless effort. Men were evidently aloft, and in some numbers, searching the ocean with their eyes, but still no answering signal came from the vessel.

The ship continued to approach, and the raft was less than half a mile from her bows, when the vast fabric suddenly receded from the breeze, showed the whole of its glittering broadside, and, swinging its yards, betrayed by its new position that the search in that direction was abandoned. The instant Ludlow saw the filling-off of the frigate's bows, he cried:

"Now, raise your voices together; this is the final chance!"

They united in a common shout, with the exception of the Skimmer of the Seas. The latter leaned against the top with folded arms, listening to their impotent efforts with a melancholy smile.

"It is well attempted," said the calm and extraordinary seaman when the clamor had ceased, advancing along the raft, and motioning for all to be silent; "but it has failed. The swinging of the yards, and the order given in wearing ship, would prevent a strange sound from being audible to men so actively employed. I flatter none with hope, but this is truly the moment for a final effort."

He placed his hands to his mouth, and, disregarding words, he raised a cry so clear, so powerful, and yet so full, that it seemed impossible those in the vessel should not hear it. Thrice did he repeat the experiment, though it was evident that each successive exertion was feebler than the last.

"They hear!" cried Alida. "There is movement in the sails!"

"'Tis the breeze freshening," said Ludlow, in sadness, at her side. "Each moment takes them away!"

The melancholy truth was too apparent for denial, and for half an hour the retiring ship was watched in the bitterness of disappointment. At the end of that time she fired a gun, spread additional canvas on her wide booms, and stood away before the wind to join her consort, whose upper sails were already dipping to the surface

of the sea in the southern board. With this change in her movements, vanished all expectation of succor from the cruiser of the enemy.

Perhaps, in every situation of life, it is necessary that hope should be first lessened by disappointment, before the buoyancy of the human mind will permit it to descend to the level of an evil fortune. Until a frustrated effort teaches him the difficulty of the attempt, he who has fallen may hope to rise again; and it is only when an exertion has been made with lessened means, that we learn the value of advantages, which have perhaps been long enjoyed, with a very undue estimate of their importance. Until the stern of the French frigate was seen retiring from the raft, those who were on it had not been fully sensible of the extreme danger of their situation. Hope had been strongly excited by the return of dawn; for while the shadows of night lay on the ocean, their situation resembled that of one who strove to pierce the obscurity of the future, in order to obtain a presage of better fortunes. With the light had come the distant sail. As the day advanced, the ship had approached, relinquished her search, and disappeared, without a prospect of her return.

The stoutest heart among the group on the raft began to sink at the gloomy fate which now seemed inevitable.

"Here is an evil omen!" whispered Ludlow, directing his companion's eyes to the dark and pointed fins of three or four sharks that were gliding above the surface of the water, and in so fearful a proximity to their persons as to render their situation on the low spars, over which the water was washing and retiring at each rise and fall of the waves, doubly dangerous. "The creatures' instinct speaks ill for our hopes!"

"There is a belief among seamen that these animals feel a secret impulse, which directs them to their prey," returned the Skimmer. "But fortune may yet balk them. Rogerson!" calling to one of his followers; "thy pockets are rarely wanting in a fisherman's tackle. Hast thou, haply, line and hook for these hungry miscreants? The question is getting narrowed to one in which the simplest philosophy is the wisest. When eat or to be eaten is the mooted point, most men will decide for the former."

A hook of sufficient size was soon produced, and a line was quietly provided from some of the small cordage that still remained about the masts. A piece of leather, torn from a spar, answered for the bait; and the lure was thrown. Extreme hunger seemed to engross the voracious animals, who darted at the imaginary prey with the rapidity of lightning. The shock was so sudden and violent that the hapless mariner was drawn from his slippery and precarious footing into the sea. The whole passed with a frightful and alarming rapidity. A common cry of horror was heard, and the last despairing glance of the fallen man was witnessed. The mutilated body floated for an instant in its blood, with the look of agony and terror still imprinted on the conscious countenance. At the next moment it had become food for the monsters of the sea.

All had passed away but the deep dye on the surface of the ocean. The gorged fish disappeared; but the dark spot remained near the immovable raft, as if placed there to warn the survivors of their fate. "This is horrible!" said Ludlow.

"A sail!" shouted the Skimmer, whose voice and tone, breaking in on that moment of intense horror and apprehension, sounded like a cry from the heavens. "My gallant brigantine!"

"God grant she comes with better fortune than those who have so lately left us!"

"God grant it, truly! If this hope fail, there is none left. Few pass here, and we have had sufficient proof that our topgallants are not so lofty as to catch every eye."

All attention was now bestowed on the white speck which was visible on the margin of the ocean, and which the Skimmer of the Seas confidently pronounced to be the *Water-Witch*.

None but a seaman could have felt this certainty; for, seen from the low raft, there was little else to be distinguished but the heads of the upper sails. The direction, too, was unfavorable, as it was to leeward; but both Ludlow and the free-trader assured their companions that the vessel was endeavoring to beat in with the land.

The two hours that succeeded lingered like days of misery. So much depended on a variety of events, that every circumstance was noted by the seamen of the party with an interest bordering on agony. A failure of the wind might compel the vessel to remain stationary, and then both brigantine and raft would be at the mercy of the uncertain currents of the ocean; a change of wind might cause a change of course, and render a meeting impossible; an increase of the breeze might cause destruction, even before the succor might come. In addition to these obvious hazards, there were all the chances which

were dependent on the fact that the people of the brigantine had every reason to believe the fate of the party was already sealed.

Still fortune seemed propitious; for the breeze, though steady, was light, the intention of the vessel was evidently to pass somewhere near them, and the hope that their object was search, so strong and plausible, as to exhilarate every bosom.

At the expiration of the time named, the brigantine passed the raft to leeward, and so near as to render the smallest objects in her rigging distinctly visible.

"The faithful fellows are looking for us!" exclaimed the freetrader, with strong emotion in his voice. "They are men to scour the coast, ere they abandon us!"

"They pass us—wave the signal—it may catch their eyes!"

The little flag was unheeded, and, after so long and so intense expectation, the party on the raft had the pain to see the swift-moving vessel glide past them, and drawing so far ahead as to leave little hope of her return. The heart of even the Skimmer of the Seas seemed to sink within him at the disappointment.

"For myself, I care not," said the stout mariner, mournfully. "Of what consequence is it in what sea, or in what voyage a seaman goes into his watery tomb? —but for thee, my hapless and playful Eudora, I could wish another fate—ha!—she tacks!—the sea-green lady has an instinct for her children, after all!"

The brigantine was in stays. In ten or fifteen minutes more the vessel was again abeam of the raft, and to windward.

"If she pass us now, our chance is gone, without a shadow of hope," said the Skimmer, motioning solemnly for silence. Then, applying his hand to his mouth, he shouted, as if despair lent a giant's volume to his lungs—

"Ho! the *Water-Witch*, ahoy!"

The last words issued from his lips with the clear, audible cry that the peculiar sound is intended to produce. It appeared as if the conscious little bark knew its commander's voice; for its course changed slightly, as if the fabric was possessed of the consciousness and faculties of life.

"Ho! The *Water-Witch*—ahoy!" shouted the Skimmer, with a still mightier effort.

"Hilloa!" came down faintly on the breeze, and the direction of the brigantine again altered.

"The *Water-Witch!*—the *Water-Witch!*—ahoy!" broke out of the lips of the mariner of the shawl, with a supernatural force—the last cry being drawn out till he who uttered it sank back exhausted with the effort.

The words were still ringing in the ears of the breathless party on the raft, when a heavy shout swept across the water. At the next moment the boom of the brigantine swung off, and her narrow bows were seen pointing toward the little beacon of white that played above the sea. It was but a moment, but it was a moment pregnant with a thousand hopes and fears, before the beautiful craft was gliding within fifty feet of the top. In less than five minutes the spars of the *Coquette* were floating on the wide ocean, unpeopled and abandoned.

The first sensation of the Skimmer of the Seas, when his foot touched the brigantine, might have been one of deep and intense gratitude. He was silent, and seemingly oppressed at the throat. Stepping along the planks, he cast an eye aloft, and struck his hand powerfully on the capstan, in a manner that was divided between convulsion and affection. Then he smiled grimly on his attentive and obedient crew, speaking with his wonted cheerfulness and authority:

"Fill away the topsail—brace up and haul aft! Trim everything flat as boards, boys; jam the dear hussy in with the coast!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Beseech you, sirs, were you present at this relation?"—WINTER'S TALE.

On the following morning the windows of the Lust in Rust denoted the presence of its owner. There was an air of melancholy, yet of happiness, in the faces of many who were seen about the buildings and the grounds, as if a very great good had been accompanied by some grave and qualifying circumstance of sorrow. The negroes wore an air of that love of the extraordinary which is the concomitant of ignorance, while those of the more fortunate resembled men who retained a recollection of serious evils that were passed.

In the private apartment of the burgher, however, an interview took place which was characterized by an air of deep concern. The parties were only the freetrader and the Alderman. But it was apparent, in the look of each, that they met like men who had interesting and serious matters to discuss. Still, one accustomed to the expressions of the human countenance might have seen that while the former was about to introduce topics in which his feelings were powerfully en-

listed, the other looked to the grosser interests of his commerce.

"My minutes are counted," said the mariner, stepping into the center of the room and facing his companion. "That which is to be said must be said briefly. The inlet can only be passed on the rising water, and it will ill consult your opinions of prudence were I to tarry till the hue and cry that will follow the intelligence of that which has lately happened in the offing shall be heard in the Province."

"Spoken with a rover's discretion! This reserve will perpetuate friendship, which is naught weakened by your activity in our late uncomfortable voyage on the yards and masts of Queen Anne's late cruiser. Well! I wish no ill-luck to any loyal gentleman in her Majesty's service; but it is a thousand pities that thou wert not ready, now the coast is clear, with a good heavy inward cargo! The last was altogether an affair of secret drawers and rich laces; valuable in itself, and profitable in the exchange; but the colony is sadly in want of certain articles that can only be landed at leisure."

"I come on other matters. There have been transactions between us, Alderman Van Beverout, that you little understand."

"You speak of a small mistake in the last invoice? 'Tis all explained, Master Skimmer, on a second examination; and thy accuracy is as well established as that of the Bank of England."

"Established or not, let him who doubts cease to deal. I have no other motto than 'Confidence,' nor any other rule but 'Justice.'"

"You overrun my meaning, friend of mine. I intimate no suspicions; but accuracy is the soul of commerce, as profit is its object. Clear accounts, with reasonable balances, are the surest cements of business intimacies. A little frankness operates, in a secret trade, like equity in the courts; which re-establishes the justice that the law has destroyed. What is thy purpose?"

"It is now many years, Alderman Van Beverout, since this secret trade was commenced between you and my predecessor—he whom you have thought my father, but who only claimed that revered appellation by protecting the helplessness and infancy of the orphan child of a friend."

"The latter circumstance is new to me," returned the burgher, slowly bowing his head. "It may explain certain levities which have not been without their embarrassment. 'Tis five-and-twenty years, come August, Master Skimmer, and twelve of them have been under thy auspices. I will not say that the adventures might not have been better managed; as it is, they are tolerable. I am getting old, and think of closing the risks and hazards of life—two or three, or, at the most, four or five lucky voyages, must, I think, bring a final settlement between us."

"'Twill be made sooner. I believe the history of my predecessor was no secret to you. The manner in which he was driven from the marine of the Stuarts, on account of his opposition to tyranny; his refuge, with an only daughter, in the colonies; and his final recourse to the free-trade for a livelihood, have often been alluded to between us."

"Hum—I have a good memory for business, Master Skimmer, but I am as forgetful as a new-made lord of his pedigree, on all matters that should be overlooked. I daresay, however, it was as you have stated."

"You know, that when my protector and predecessor abandoned the land, he took his all with him upon the water."

"He took a wholesome and good going schooner, Master Skimmer, with an assorted freight of chosen tobacco, well ballasted with stones off the sea-shore. He was no foolish admirer of sea-green women and flaunting brigantines. Often did the royal cruisers mistake the worthy dealer for an industrious fisherman!"

"He had his humors, and I have mine. But you forget a part of the freight he carried—a part that was not the least valuable."

"There might have been a bale of martens' furs—for the trade was just getting brisk in that article."

"There was a beautiful, an innocent, and an affectionate girl—"

The Alderman made an involuntary movement, which nearly hid his countenance from his companion.

"There was, indeed, a beautiful, and as you say, a most warm-hearted girl, in the concern!" he uttered, in a voice that was subdued and hoarse. "She died, as I have heard from thyself, Master Skimmer, in the Italian seas. I never saw the father after the last visit of his child to this coast."

"She did die among the islands of the Mediterranean. But the void she left in all the hearts who knew her, was filled in time by her—daughter."

The Alderman started from his chair, and looking the freetrader intently and anxiously in the face, he slowly repeated the word—"Daughter!"

"I have said it. Eudora is the daugh-

ter of that injured woman—need I say who is the father?"

The burgher groaned, and covering his face with his hands, he sank back into his chair, shivering convulsively.

"What evidence have I of this?" he at length muttered; "Eudora is thy sister!"

The answer of the freetrader was accompanied by a melancholy smile.

"You have been deceived. Save the brigantine, my being is attached to nothing. When my own brave father fell by the side of him who protected my youth, none of my blood were left. I loved him as a father, and he called me son, while Eudora was passed upon you as the child of a second marriage. But here is sufficient evidence of her birth."

The Alderman took a paper which his companion put gravely into his hand, and his eyes ran eagerly over its contents. It was a letter to himself from the mother of Eudora, written after the birth of the latter, and with the endearing affection of a woman. The love between the young merchant and the fair daughter of his secret correspondent had been less criminal on his part than most similar connections. Nothing but the peculiarity of their situation, and the real embarrassment of introducing to the world one whose existence was unknown to his friends, and their mutual awe of the unfortunate but still proud parent, had prevented a legal marriage. The simple forms of the colony were easy satisfied, and there was even some reason to raise a question whether they had not been sufficiently consulted to render the offspring legitimate. As Myndert Van Beverout, therefore, read the epistle of her whom he had once so truly loved, and whose loss had, in more senses than one, been to him an irreparable misfortune, since his character might have yielded to her gentle and healthful influence, his limbs trembled, and his whole frame betrayed the violence of extreme agitation. The language of the dying woman was kind and free from reproach, but was solemn and admonitory. She communicated the birth of their child; but she left it to the disposition of her own father, while she apprised the author of its being of its existence; and in the event of its ever being consigned to his care, she earnestly recommended it to his love. The close was a leave-taking, in which the lingering affections of this life were placed in mournful contrast to the hopes of the future.

"Why has this so long been hidden from me?" demanded the agitated merchant. "Why, O reckless and fearless man! have I been permitted to expose the frailties of nature to my own child?"

The smile of the freetrader was bitter and proud.

"Mr. Van Beverout, we are no dealers of the short voyage. Our trade is the concern of life; our world, the *Water-Witch*. As we have so little of the interests of the land, our philosophy is above its weaknesses. The birth of Eudora was concealed from you at the will of her grandfather. It might have been resentment—it might have been pride. Had it been affection, the girl has that to justify the fraud."

"And Eudora, herself? Does she—or has she long known the truth?"

"But lately. Since the death of our common friend, the girl has been solely dependent on me for counsel and protection. It is now a year since she first learned she was not my sister. Until then, like you, she supposed us equally derived from one who was the parent of neither. Necessity has compelled me of late to keep her much in the brigantine."

"The retribution is righteous!" groaned the Alderman. "I am punished for my pusillanimity in the degradation of my own child!"

The step of the freetrader, as he advanced nearer to his companion, was full of dignity, and his keen eye glowed with the resentment of an offended man.

"Alderman Van Beverout," he said, with a stern rebuke in his voice, "you receive your daughter, stainless as was her unfortunate mother, when necessity compelled him whose being was wrapped up in hers to trust her beneath your roof. We of the contraband have our own opinions of right and wrong; and my gratitude, no less than my principles, teaches me that the descendant of my benefactor is to be protected, not injured. Had I, in truth, been the brother of Eudora, language and conduct more innocent could not have been shown her, than that she has both heard and witnessed while guarded by my care."

"From my soul, I thank thee!" burst from the lips of the Alderman. "The girl shall be acknowledged; and with such a dowry as I can give, she may yet hope for a suitable and honorable marriage."

"Thou mayst bestow her on thy favorite Patroon," returned the Skimmer, with a calm but sad eye. "She is more than worthy of all he can return. The man is willing to take her, for he is not ignorant of her sex and history. That much I thought due to Eudora herself, when fortune placed the young man in my power."

"Thou art only too honest for this wicked world, Master Skimmer! Let me see the loving pair, and bestow my blessing on the instant!"

The freetrader turned slowly away, and, opening a door, he motioned for those within to enter. Alida instantly entered, leading the counterfeit Seadrift, clad in the proper attire of her sex. Although the burgher had often seen the supposed sister of the Skimmer in her female habiliments, she never before had struck him as being of so rare beauty as at that moment. The silken whiskers had been removed and in their places were burning cheeks, that were rather enriched than discolored by the warm touches of the sun. The dark glossy ringlets, that were no longer artfully converted to the purposes of a masquerade, fell naturally in curls about the temples and brows, shading a countenance which in general was playfully arch, though at that moment it was shadowed by reflection and feeling. It is seldom that two such beings are seen together as those who now knelt at the feet of the merchant. In the breast of the latter the accustomed and lasting love of the uncle and protector appeared, for an instant, to struggle with the new-born affection of a parent. Nature was too strong for even his blunted and perverted sentiment; and calling his child aloud by name, the selfish and calculating Alderman sank upon the neck of Eudora and wept.

It would have been difficult to trace the emotions of the stern but observant freetrader, as he watched the progress of this scene. Distrust, uneasiness, and finally, melancholy, were in his eye. With the latter expression predominant, he quitted the room, like one who felt a stranger had no right to witness emotions so sacred.

Two hours later, and the principal personages of the narrative were assembled on the margin of the Cove, beneath the shade of an oak that seemed coeval with the continent. The brigantine was aweigh; and, under a light show of canvas, she was making easy stretches in the little basin, resembling, by the ease and grace of her movements, some beautiful swan sailing up and down in the enjoyment of its instinct. A boat had just touched the shore, and the Skimmer of the Seas stood near, stretching out a hand to aid the boy Zephyr to land.

"We subjects of the elements are slaves to superstition," he said, when the light foot of the child touched the ground. "It is the consequence of lives which ceaselessly present dangers superior to our powers. For many years have I believed that some great good, or some greater evil, would accompany the first visit of this boy to the land. For the first time his foot now stands on solid earth. I await the fulfillment of the augury."

"It will be happy," returned Ludlow; "Alida and Eudora will instruct him in the opinions of this simple and fortunate country, and he seemeth one likely to do early credit to his schooling."

"I fear the boy will regret the lessons of the sea-green lady! Captain Ludlow, there is yet a duty to perform, which, as a man of more feeling than you may be disposed to acknowledge, I cannot neglect. I have understood that you are accepted by la belle Barberie?"

"Such is my happiness."

"Sir, in dispensing with explanation of the past, you have shown a noble confidence, that merits a return. When I came upon this coast, it was with the determination of establishing the claims of Eudora to the protection and fortune of her father. If I had mistrusted the influence and hostility of one so placed, and so gifted to persuade as this lady, you will remember it was before acquaintance had enabled me to estimate more than her beauty. She was seized in her pavilion by my agency, and transported as a captive to the brigantine."

"I had believed her acquainted with the history of her cousin, and willing to aid in some fantasy which was to lead to the present happy restoration of the latter to her natural friends."

"You did her disinterestedness no more than justice. As some atonement for the personal wrong, and as the speediest and surest means of appeasing her alarm, I made my captive acquainted with the facts. Eudora then heard, also for the first time, the history of her origin. The evidence was irresistible, and we found a devoted friend where we had expected a rival."

"I knew that Alida could not prove less generous!" cried the admiring Ludlow, raising the hand of the blushing girl to his lips. "The loss of fortune is a gain, by showing her true character!"

"Hist—hist!" interrupted the Alderman; "there is little need to proclaim a loss of any kind. What must be done in the way of natural justice, will doubtless be submitted to; but why let all in the colony know how much or how little is given with a bride?"

"The loss of fortune will be amply met," returned the freetrader. "These bags contain gold. The dowry of my charge is ready at a moment's warning,

whenever she shall make known her choice."

"Success and prudence!" exclaimed the burgher. "There is no less than a most commendable forethought in thy provision, Master Skimmer; and whatever may be the opinion of the Exchequer Judges of thy punctuality and credit, it is mine that there are less responsible men about the Bank of England itself? This money is, no doubt, that which the girl can lawfully claim in right of her late grandfather!"

"It is."

"I take this to be a favorable moment to speak plainly on a subject which is very near my heart, and which may as well be broached under such favorable auspices as under any other. I understand, Mr. Van Staats, that, on a farther examination of your sentiments toward an old friend, you are of opinion that a closer alliance than the one we had contemplated will most conduce to your happiness?"

"I will acknowledge that the coldness of la belle Barberie has damped my own warmth," returned the Patroon of Kinderhook, who rarely delivered himself of more, at a time, than the occasion required.

"And, furthermore, I have been told, sir, that an intimacy of a fortnight has given you reason to fix your affections on my daughter, whose beauty is hereditary, and whose fortune is not likely to be diminished by this act of justice on the part of that upright and gallant mariner."

"To be received into the favor of your family, Mr. Van Beverout, would leave me little to desire in this life."

"And as for the other world, I never heard of a Patroon of Kinderhook who did not leave us with some comfortable hopes for the future; as in reason they should, since few families in the colonies have done more for the support of religion than they. They gave largely to the Dutch churches in Manhattan; they have actually built, with their own means, three very pretty brick edifices on the Manor, each having its Flemish steeple and suitable weathercocks, besides having done something handsome toward the venerable structure in Albany. Eudora, my child, this gentleman is a particular friend, and as such I can presume to recommend him to thy favor. You are not absolutely strangers; but, in order that you may have every occasion to decide impartially, you will remain here together for a month longer, which will enable you to choose without distraction and confusion. More than this, for the present, it is unnecessary to say; for it is my practice to leave all matters of this magnitude entirely to Providence."

The daughter, on whose speaking face the color went and came, like lights changing in an Italian sky, continued silent.

"You have happily put aside the curtain which concealed a mystery that no longer gave me uneasiness," interrupted Ludlow, addressing the freetrader. "Can you do more, and say whence came this letter?"

The dark eye of Eudora instantly lighted. She looked at the Skimmer of the Seas, and laughed.

"'Twas another of those womanly artifices which have been practiced in my brigantine. It was thought that a young commander of a royal cruiser would be less apt to watch our movements, were his mind bent on the discovery of such a correspondent."

"And the trick has been practiced before?"

"I confess it. But I can linger no longer. In a few minutes, the tide will turn, and the inlet become impassable. Eudora, we must decide on the fortunes of this child. Shall he to the ocean again?—or shall he remain, to vary his life with a landsman's chances?"

"Who and what is the boy?" gravely demanded the Alderman.

"One dear to both," rejoined the freetrader. "His father was my nearest friend, and his mother long watched the youth of Eudora. Until this moment, he has been our mutual care; he must now choose between us."

"He will not quit me!" hastily interrupted the alarmed Eudora; "thou art my adopted son, and none can guide thy young mind like me. Thou hast need of woman's tenderness, Zephyr, and wilt not quit me?"

"Let the child be the arbiter of his own fate. I am credulous on the point of fortune, which is, at least, a happy belief for the contraband."

"Then let him speak. Wilt remain here, amid these smiling fields, to ramble among yonder gay and sweetly-scented flowers?—or wilt thou back to the water, where all is vacant and without change?"

The boy looked wistfully into her anxious eye, then he bent his own hesitating glance on the calm features of the freetrader.

"We can put to sea," he said; "and when we make the homeward passage again, there will be many curious things for thee, Eudora!"

"But this may be the last opportunity to know the land of thy ances-

tors. Remember how terrible is the ocean in its anger, and how often the brigantine has been in danger of shipwreck!"

"Nay, that is womanish! I have been on the royal-yard in the squalls, and it never seemed to me that there was danger."

"Thou hast the unconsciousness and reliance of a ship-boy! But those who are older know that the life of a sailor is one of constant and imminent hazard. Thou hast been among the islands in the hurricane, and seen the power of the elements!"

"I was in the hurricane, and so was the brigantine; and there you see how taut and neat she is aloft, as if nothing had happened!"

"And you saw us yesterday floating on the open sea, while a few ill-fastened spars kept us from going into its depths!"

"The spars floated, and you were not drowned; else I should have wept bitterly, Eudora."

"But thou wilt go deeper into the country, and see more of its beauties—its rivers and its mountains—its caverns and its woods. Here all is change, while the water is ever the same."

"Surely, Eudora, you forget strangely! Here it is all America. This mountain is America; yonder land across the bay is America, and the anchorage of yesterday was America. When we shall run off the coast, next land-fall will be England, or Holland, or Africa; and with a good wind, we may run down the shore of two or three countries in a day."

"And on them, too, thoughtless boy! If you lose this occasion, thy life will be wedded to hazard!"

"Farewell, Eudora!" said the urchin, raising his mouth to give and receive the parting kiss.

"Eudora, adieu!" added a deep and melancholy voice at her elbow. "I can delay no longer, for my people show symptoms of impatience. Should this be the last of my voyages to the coast, thou wilt not forget those with whom thou hast so long shared good and evil!"

"Not yet—not yet—you will not quit us yet! Leave me the boy—leave me some other memorial of the past besides this pain!"

"My hour has come. The wind is freshening, and I trifle with its favor. 'Twill be better for thy happiness that none know the history of the brigantine; a few hours will draw a hundred curious eyes from the town upon us."

"What care I for their opinions?—thou wilt not—cannot—leave me yet!"

"Gladly would I stay, Eudora, but a seaman's home is his ship. Too much precious time is already wasted. Once more, adieu!"

The dark eye of the girl glanced wildly about her. It seemed as if, in that one quick and hurried look, it drank in all that belonged to the land and its enjoyments.

"Whither go you?" she asked, scarce suffering her voice to rise above a whisper. "Whither do you sail, and when do you return?"

"I follow fortune. My return may be distant—never! Adieu, then, Eudora—be happy with the friends that Providence hath given thee!"

The wandering eyes of the girl of the sea became still more unsettled. She grasped the hand of the freetrader in both her own, and wrung it in an impassioned and unconscious manner. Then releasing her hold, she opened wide her arms, and cast them convulsively about his unmoved and unyielding form.

"We will go together! I am thine, and thine only!"

"Thou knowest not what thou sayest, Eudora!" gasped the Skimmer. "Thou hast a father—friend—husband—"

"Away, away!" cried the frantic girl, waving her hand wildly toward Alida and the Patroon, who advanced as if hurrying to rescue her from a precipice. "Thine and thine only!"

The smuggler released himself from her frenzied grasp, and, with the strength of a giant, he held the struggling girl at the length of his arm, while he endeavored to control the tempest of passion that struggled within him.

"Think, for one moment, think!" he said. "Thou wouldst follow an outcast—an outlaw—one hunted and condemned of men!"

"Thine, and thine only!"

"With a ship for a dwelling—the tempestuous ocean for a world!"

"Thy world is my world!—thy home my home—thy danger, mine!"

The shout which burst out of the chest of the Skimmer of the Seas was one of uncontrollable exultation.

"Thou art mine!" he cried. "Before a tie like this, the claim of a father is forgotten! Burgher, adieu! I will deal by thy daughter more honestly than thou didst deal by my benefactor's child!"

Eudora was lifted from the ground as if her weight had been that of a feather; and, spite of a sudden and impetuous movement of Ludlow and the Patroon, she was borne to the boat. In a moment the b-

was afloat, with the gallant boy tossing his sea-cap upward in triumph. The brigantine, as if conscious of what had passed, wore round like a whirling chariot; and, ere the spectators had recovered from their confusion and wonder, the boat was hanging at the tackles. The free-trader was seen on the poop, with an arm cast about the form of Eudora, waving a hand to the motionless group on the shore, while the still half-unconscious girl of the ocean sighed her faint adieus to Alida and her father.

The vessel glided through the inlet, and was immediately rocking on the billows of the surf. Then, taking the full weight of the southern breeze, the fine and attenuated spars bent to its force, and the progress of the swift-moving craft was apparent by the bubbling line of its wake.

The day had begun to decline before Alida and Ludlow quitted the lawn of the Lust in Rust. For the first hour, the dark hull of the brigantine was seen supporting the moving cloud of canvas. Then the low structure vanished, and sail after sail settled into the water, until nothing was visible but a speck of glittering white. It lingered for a minute, and was swallowed in the void.

The nuptials of Ludlow and Alida were touched with a shade of melancholy. Natural affection in one, and professional sympathy in the other, had given them a deep and lasting interest in the fate of the adventurers.

Years passed away, and months were spent at the villa, in which a thousand anxious looks were cast upon the ocean. Each morning, during the early months of summer, did Alida hasten to the windows of her pavilion, in the hope of seeing the vessel of the contraband anchored in the Cove; but always without success. It never returned; and though the rebuked and disappointed Alderman caused many secret inquiries to be made along the whole extent of the American coast, he never again heard of the renowned SKIMMER OF THE SEAS, or of his matchless WATER-WITCH.

THE END OF VOLUME FOUR.